LEARNING / F4
Bringing up teenagers can be daunting but parents have to look at themselves

WORLD / A29
Terrorism to figure prominently during Pope's trip to US

WORLD / A30
China-Taiwan meet breaks 60 years of ice

LIFESTYLE / C1
A stretch of Orlina's imagination

Haiti gov't collapses amid food price anger

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI—HAITI'S GOVernment fell on Saturday after senators fired the prime minister, hoping to defuse widespread anger over rising food prices that has led to days of deadly protests and looting.

But violence flared again hours later in the capital, where a United Nations police officer was shot dead and a market was set on fire.

HAITI, A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, April 14, 2008 ★★ 11 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 126 P15 website: www.inquirer.net

First dog in space feted by Russians

MOSCOW—RUSSIAN officials on Friday feted Laika, the plucky stray dog that became its mission half a century ago as the first living creature from Earth to fly into space.

FIRST, C12

IMF chief warns of war over food

High prices may lead to trade imbalances

WASHINGTON—THE HEAD of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned that if food prices remain high, there will be war and other dire consequences for people in many developing countries.

IMF managing director Dominique Strauss-Kahn added that the problem could also create trade imbalances that would impact major advanced economies, "so it is not only a humanitarian question."

With governments in Haiti, Egypt and Bangladesh already facing social unrest because of rising food prices and shortages, Strauss-Kahn said Saturday that if the price spike continued, "thousands, hundreds of thousands of people will be starving. Children will be suffering from malnutrition, with consequences for all their lives." (See story above.)

Development gains made in the past five or 10 years could be "totally destroyed," he said, warning that social unrest could even lead to war.

"At no time, learning from the past, these kinds of questions sometimes end in war," he said.

Thirty-seven countries currently face food crises, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization.

On Saturday, Germany's development minister, who attended the World Bank's Sunday meeting, called for greater regulation of the global biofuels market to prevent its expansion driving up food prices.

"It is unacceptable for the export of agrofuels to pose a threat to the supply situation of the very people already living in poverty," Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul said in a statement.

She said the world needed new rules that balance goals, including climate

INFLATION, A13

TWO vehicles owned by priests at the Immaculate Conception Metro Cathedral were destroyed by the bomb.

POLICE investigators gather evidence after the bomb attack on the church premises.

ALVIN

Blasts rock Zambo cathedral, building

By Julio S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—EXPLOSIONS ripped through the premises of the Immaculate Conception Metro Cathedral and a three-story building housing an office of the Department of Foreign Affairs at dawn yesterday but caused no casualties, police said.

Supt. Jonathan Perez, officer in charge of the city police, said the first explosion occurred in the church parking lot on Lopeztuma Street at around 4:15 a.m. It damaged two cars, a concrete wall and two steel gates.

Ten minutes later, another bomb exploded at the entrance of the Yuchin Kaffebistan, just below the DFA office on Veterans Avenue, damaging a metal billboard and door.

Perez said the first bomb had been placed under a van owned by the church.

The cathedral's caretaker said he saw three men enter the church premises on a motorcycle and then leave.

"To be called the police. While the police were on their way, the bomb exploded," Perez said. "The good news here is that no one was hurt."

Archbishop Romulo Valles described the incident as an "act of the forces of darkness, an evil act."

BLASTS, A6

Church gives out rice, rules out violence

By Margaux C. Ortiz
and Christine O. Avendaño

THE LINES WERE LONG AND church outlets selling government-subsidized rice in Metro Manila quickly ran out of supplies yesterday, a clear sign that demand for cheap rice is strong in these times of galloping food prices.

In just two hours, the 40 cavans of rice supplied to each of two parishes, for instance, were sold out, said Fr Antonio Pascual, executive director of Caritas Manila.

Some 80 food outlets in churches and parishes under the Archdiocese of Manila formally opened yesterday morning to sell rice from the state-run National Food Authority (NFA).

But while citing the inadequacy, Pascual ruled out the possibility of food riots erupting anytime in the queues.

"Not in the Philippines," he said. "First, we have alternatives to rice like kamote, corn, cassava, etc., and we are such an adaptable people."

Filipinos, the priest noted, are by nature "benevolent and submissive to the Church's moral authority and persuasion."

Pascual said the 2,800 sacks of rice the NFA had allotted daily for Caritas Manila's "Bigasan sa Parokya" outlets were not enough to serve some 50,000

CHURCH, A12

Frustrations over coups, people power

By Amando Doronila

SPARKS ARE FLYING FROM THE head-on collision of two powerful social and political tendencies in the Philippines since the 1986 People Power Revolution.

ANALYSIS

These two concepts—one populist, the other elitist and bureaucratic—have found expression in the repeated people power movements as agents of political change and military interventions. Both have determined the outcomes of recurrent political crises of Philippine constitutional democracy. Their interventions have not resulted in deepening the consolidation of restored Philippine democracy.

The clashes of these two concepts, embodied by people power, and the other, the cup d'état, have torn the fabric of electoral democracy. The result of these clashes has been ungovernance.

People power was an extraconstitutional mode of changing regimes, regardless of whether they were dictatorial, such as the Ferdinand Marcos

THEFRUSTRATIONS, A13

Hanjin condo projects began without ECC

By Arlyn dela Cruz
Contributor

THE SOUTH KOREAN BUILDERS OF the two controversial high-rise condominiums in the Subic Bay reclavoir began constructing the buildings well before two port authorities gave them official environmental clearance, a technical expert at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) has revealed.

When the SBMA finally released the Environmental Clearance Certificate for the two buildings, "about 20 percent of the project was already completed," environmental and agricultural engineer Carlito "Bing" M. Bulo Jr. said in Filipino.

Bulo heads the Technical Environmental Review Committee that recommended to the SBMA board the approval of the housing project.

The project builder, Hanjin Heavy Industries & Construction Ltd., has said it built the condos to house its Korean employees.

One of the country's biggest foreign investors, Hanjin has built a $1.6-billion shipyard at Subic and is constructing a $2-billion shipping facility in Misamis Oriental. President Macapagal-Arroyo has supported the shipyard

HANJIN, A12

Scientists find rare species of mangrove

By Yolanda Soriete Fuentes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—SCIENTISTS HAVE found a rare species of mangrove in what they described as a unique environmental setting in Masinloc, Zambales.

"It's a hybrid mangrove called Rhizophora x lamarckii produced by between Aziale (Rhizophora apiculata) and Bakauan bato' (Rhizophora stylosa)," Severino Salmo, a mangrove

SCIENTISTS, A16

NESTOR Dais, chief of Barangay Dagupan in Masinloc, Zambales, inspects the rare mangrove species on Yitu Island discovered by Severino Salmo and Dr. Norman Duke.

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

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Teodoro, Esperon: Pardon Magdalo 9

Trillanes faction sees scripted release of former rebel colleagues

By Nikko Dizon

"IT IS OBVIOUSLY A CHARADE. THEY ARE following a fully written script."

Argee Guevarra, lawyer of the Magdalo group led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, was referring to the recommendation of Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. to grant executive clemency to the nine former Magdalo junior officers who pleaded guilty in charges of coup d'etat.

The public apology issued by the Army officers was the reason cited by the top security officials for their recommendation.

Last Friday, Captains Gerardo Gambala, Milo Maestrecampo, John Andrew, Albert Baldoz Alvin Elmira and Lawrence Louis Savarez, Pete Lavanzuela, Clarence Dungga-an and Honrado Somera, Jr., and Second Lieutenant Kimpoy Bryan Yang apologized to the Filipino people, the Armed Forces administration and the AFP.

Gambala et al. also sought the "mercy and grace" of President Macapagal-Arroyo as a precondition to lift at the Army officers' club in Fort Bonifacio.

Esperon told reporters his joint recommendation with Teodoro had been forwarded to Malacañang yesterday.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said yesterday he would push for a presidential pardon for the nine former military officers.

Endorsements by officials who head the police, military and defense establishment would have a positive effect on the decision of the Board of Elections and Parole, said Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol.

The board would recommend to Ms Arroyo whether a presidential pardon should be granted to the convicted officers, Apostol told the Inquirer yesterday in a phone interview.

A senior close to the Trillanes group told the Inquirer that the nine officers and the Magdalo officials "will be happy if they (Gambala et al.) will be released."

"That's what they've always wanted—their freedom," the source said, quoting leaders of the Trillanes-led Magdalo group.

Tina Gambala et al. could not cope with their incarceration was one of the reasons they recovered and eventually broke away from the group, said the source, who requested anonymity, citing security considerations.

"They won't admit it because it is embarrassing. (Brod) Jojo et Maestrecampo ay nasikmura nang matagal (Maestrecampo, in particular, could not bear being detained). In fact, when they were detained after Oakwood, he already set a time-table for his release. He thought that he would be released by December 2003," the source said.

In a statement released by the Department of National Defense, Teodoro said the DND and the AFP "have found sufficient reasons for endorsing to the President the grant of pardon."

"The power of the President under the Constitution to grant executive clemency is absolute once the conditions for the granting of pardon are already present," Teodoro said.

Teodoro, a bar topnotcher and a Harvard-trained lawyer, said that Gambala et al. qualified for clemency because they had been convicted of the crime of coup d'etat.

He also said the recommendation for executive clemency for the nine Army officers was a "mere ornament with the President's holistic approach towards achieving national unity and reconciliation."

"The President is poised to grant clemency to CPP/NPA/NDF elements and is now getting the concurrence of Congress on the matter," Teodoro said.

Guevarra, lawyer for the 26 imprisoned Magdalo group, said news of the "usefulness and abbreviated process" in Teodoro and Esperon's joint recommendation for executive clemency for Gambala et al.

"It casts it all up, this goes to show that the change to a guilty plea by the nine officers and the subsequent granting of an executive clemency to them was a setup stage managed by former al Esperon," Guevarra said.

With CN Ichiro O. Arimitsu and Leila B. Salaverria

WHAT'S INSIDE

PAGASA SAYS weather to cool in Metro Manila, up to Mindanao /A8

OMBUDSMAN: Swine program borrowers list may be released /A11

With GMA order, solons see cheap meds bill passing

By Dec. Cabuenas Jr. and TJ Burgonio

SENATORS HAVE EXPRESSED confidence President Macapagal-Arroyo's directive to halt the "generics only" provision in the proposed cheaper medicines bill would break the overgeneralized impasse that has held up passage of the pro-poor legislation.

"I'm looking forward to the swift passage of this landmark bill with the expected removal of the generics only provision from the version of the House of Representatives. The provision is a contentious matter that would be difficult to implement without the safeguards being spelled out as an amendment to the Generics Act," Sen. Pia Cayetano, chair of the Senate committee on health and demography, said in a statement.

Cayetano is in South Africa attending the 121st General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in an official capacity.

Sen. Mar Roxas urged the House committee on trade to rally around the President's proposal to hasten approval of the long-awaited measure.

"If implemented correctly by the executive branch and with the cooperation of all sectors, 20- to 30-percent savings per family on medicine is achievable within a reasonable period after approval," Roxas said, noting the cheaper medicines bill was 99-percent complete with the one-percent the generics only provision being pushed by the lower house.

Both houses

"The cheap medicine bill will soon be a law. There is no more impediment in both houses of Congress now. There should be no other reason to delay," said Speaker Prospero Nograles in a text message.

Nograles said he was agreeable to removing the generics only provision "so long as we liberalize the importation by the government and others of cheap but dependable generic drugs and let the people choose what they can afford."

Presidential Adviser declared Friday that Malacañang would not push for the inclusion of the "generics only" provision in order to ensure the bill's passage by Congress.

Senators and congressmen had synchronized their versions of the measure in the bicameral conference committee, except for the generics only proviso. Recently pushed by the lower chamber.

The clause requires doctors to write only the generic names of drugs on their prescription.

Lower cost of medicine

Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas, author of one of several cheaper medicine bills, said he had objected to the provision from the start.

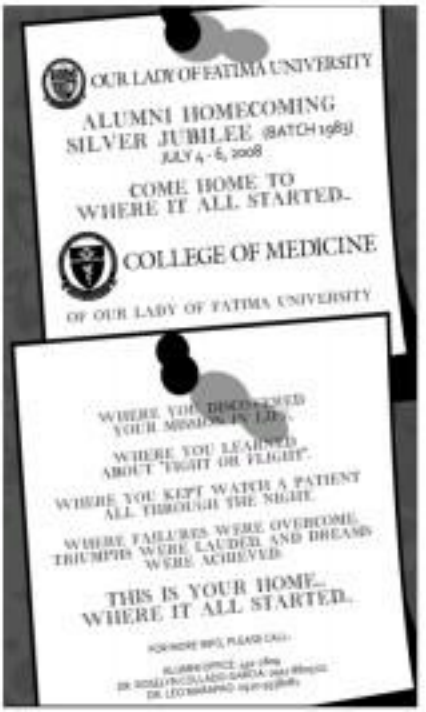
"Doctors will be at the mercy of the pharmacy sales clerks, who will practically decide which brand of the drug is dispensed," he said.

But Gullas said the President, by her announcement, might have persuaded administration lawmakers in the House sitting in the bicameral panel to adopt her position.

This, he said, would guarantee the bill's approval by both chambers.

"Enabling true and free competition is one sure way for Congress to help drive down drug prices, and make them more affordable to need Filipinos," he said in a statement.

The bill aims to lower the price of medicine through greater market competition by allowing the parallel importation of cheaper but quality medicines from abroad.



Atienza breaks an arm

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY Lito Atienza will have metal screws in his left arm when he reports for work today.

Atienza fractured his arm near the wrist when he slipped in his room at Discovery Shores on Boracay at noon shortly after arriving on the island resort on Saturday as part of the Manyan leg of the Earth Day Hero's Caravan.

"I was barefoot and I slipped. I tried to break my fall with my arm," Atienza told the Inquirer in a phone interview later Saturday from the Philippine Orthopedic Hospital in Quezon City where he went after the fall.

Atienza took Asian Spirit's last flight to Manila from 5 p.m.

He was All said Atienza was operated on at 11 p.m. on Saturday and was allowed to go home the next morning. Jocelyn R. Uy and Homer P. Burgos Jr.

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Cost of Naia-3 repair, completion may hit P800M

By Tarra Quismundo

THE TOTAL COST of reconstruction of the multibillion-peso Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 project (Naia-3) may mushroom by almost P800 million after airport executives opened a fresh bidding for the repair and completion of the facility.

The Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) is looking for qualified local or foreign contractors to rejoin the changed previous and unexpired — unfinished work at Naia-3, the value of which is still being computed at between P200 million (P13.1 billion under the current exchange rate) and $600 million (P28.9 billion).

New contract

An invitation to bid Miaa recently made public said the agency had set aside P7.28 billion budget for a new contract to complete the "supply, installation, construction, testing and commissioning of existing systems" at the terminal to make it "safe, secure and operable" under Miaa standards.

Airport development and corporate affairs chief Thelmo Soriano said the budget was based on a technical assessment by engineering consultant TGE Engineers Inc. and the Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Ltd.

Both firms advised Miaa against a soft opening but one after it found damage that could pose "life safety risks" to airport users.

Revelation

The facility 96 percent of which was said to have been completed in 2002, sustained damage after a gypsum board ceiling in the arrival area collapsed on March 27, 2006. An earthquake early this year also caused severe damage to the terminal.

"We want the general contractor to do completion and remediation in compliance with Miaa standards. The work that has to be done covers not just civil works but also airport equipment," said Soriano.

He, however, said the unfinished work might run beyond the two-year estimate. "We have our own advice from our technical consultants that it might be more than that. It [scope of work] should cover all the subsequent and shortfalls in construction."

Soriano said the long list of items to be done includes structural work and systems installation, particularly the central baggage handling system.

Miaa exposed the new bid following an decision in late January by the Japanese contractor Takenaka Corp., with which Miaa originally had a contract on how to go about repair and completion work.

Target

Miaa's bid and awards committee set the filing of expressions of interest on April 18 and the submission of bids on May 9. Miaa finds a contractor by next month.

Soriano said the terminal could still be opened within the year.

"Our target is that within six to eight months, we can finish the work. We don't want to set targets but I think it will still be doable for us to have a soft launch within the year," he said.

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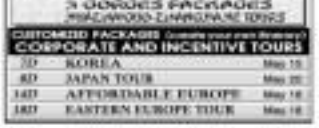

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THE EXPLOSION in the compound of the Immaculate Conception Mapa Cathedral was condemned by Archbishop Romulo Valles as an "act by forces of darkness."

Blasts rock Zambo cathedral, building

From page A1

"We should all join together and stand up and say everything to stop any further activities like this," he said.

Mayor Celso Lobregat denounced the attack but was quick to say the authorities would not "speculate as to who or what group was behind the explosion."

"We assure our residents the authorities are on top of the situation, doing everything to determine the source and motive as well as the perpetrators behind the attack," the mayor said.

SPO4 Rey Rosario, chief of the police bomb squad unit, said the device used in the cathedral attack was fashioned from #1 mortars and had a timer while the one in the mall was made from fabricated ammonium and was detonated using a mobile phone.

Police on alert

Police have been placed on the highest level of alert following the dawn explosions, Chief Supt. Arturo Cortegal, regional police director, said. Government troops and police had already tightened security in the town for a weeklong national sports festival and a medical conference, he said.

Cortegal said the caretaker reported that the men he saw talked in a dialect spoken on Jolo, where the Abu Sayyaf is active.

He said the men were seen fleeing toward downtown Zamboanga, where the second blast occurred.

Cortegal said police suspect the men were Abu Sayyaf or Jemaah Islamiyah militants, but an investigation was under way.

Not meant to kill

"The bombings were apparently not meant to kill but to cause fear," Cortegal said.

Zamboanga, a predominantly Christian city has seen sporadic bomb attacks in past years, including one that killed a US Green Beret outside an Army camp in 2002 that was blamed on the Abu Sayyaf.

The city is home to US troops providing counterinsurgency training to Filipino soldiers in a region described as home to more than 300 Abu Sayyaf bandits linked to the al-Qaida terror group.

The US and Australian embassies separately warned their citizens early this month that "extremist elements" planned to kidnap Americans and other foreigners in Zamboanga City.

The Abu Sayyaf is an US and European terrorist list for ransom kidnappings, beheadings and bomb attacks. With a report from AP

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Pagasa: Metro, other areas to get respite from heat

METRO MANILA WILL GET A break from the scorching summer heat today with a low pressure area hovering over the Visayas.

The low pressure area, spotted 14 kilometers east of Mindoro yesterday, will cross the Visayas today bringing scattered rain showers and thunderstorms to the entire area and the Bicol region, according to the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

"The low and fog and sometimes cumulus will temporarily come to the west 24 hours in the eastern part of Mindoro, the Visayas, the Bicol region, including Metro Manila," said weather specialist Nancy Abucay in a phone interview yesterday.

The temperature in Metro Manila yesterday was at a relatively 32.8 degrees Celsius as recorded at the Science Garden in Quezon City at 1 p.m. On Saturday, the metropolis sweated with a maximum temperature of 34.6 degrees Celsius.

While the capital will experience mostly cloudy skies with isolated rain showers today, the summer heat will not spare Central and Northern Luzon, Abucay said.

Meanwhile, bad weather observed in the South disrupted three Mindanao-bound flights from Manila yesterday, the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) reported.

The Philippine Airlines and Cebu Pacific Air flights to Davao turned back to Manila, the Miaa said.

PAL flight PR-477 was diverted to Cebu after leaving Manila at 10:40 a.m. to avoid a developing low pressure area over Mindanao. The plane then returned to Manila, landing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Centennial Terminal at 4:20 p.m., the airline's information office said.

CEB flight 5J 707, meanwhile, left Manila for Davao at 11:08 a.m. but was diverted to Cebu. The plane landed back in Manila at 4:20 p.m., the airline confirmed.

Jaclyn E. Jy and Reyn Quicmolas

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CLASS 1 (Light Vehicles) 4.00

Type	Type	Dinalupihan	Hacienda	Porac	Clark South	Clark Logistics	Clark North B	Clark North A	Concepcion	San Miguel	Tarlac
Type											
Dinalupihan	24.00										
Hacienda	61.00	37.00									
Porac	88.00	64.00	27.00								
Clark South	109.00	85.00	48.00	30.00							
Clark Logistics	113.00	89.00	51.00	34.00	3.00						
Clark North B	130.00	94.00	59.00	43.00	13.00	8.00					
Clark North A	123.00	99.00	62.00	46.00	16.00	11.00	3.00				
Concepcion	144.00	120.00	83.00	56.00	33.00	33.00	24.00	27.00			
San Miguel	170.00	146.00	111.00	84.00	63.00	60.00	50.00	49.00	26.00		
Tarlac	181.00	156.00	120.00	93.00	73.00	69.00	61.00	58.00	38.00	12.00	

CLASS 2 (Buses) 4.00

Type	Type	Dinalupihan	Hacienda	Porac	Clark South	Clark Logistics	Clark North B	Clark North A	Concepcion	San Miguel	Tarlac
Type											
Dinalupihan	48.00										
Hacienda	122.00	74.00									
Porac	176.00	129.00	54.00								
Clark South	217.00	170.00	83.00	41.00							
Clark Logistics	226.00	176.00	102.00	48.00	7.00						
Clark North B	240.00	193.00	118.00	64.00	23.00	16.00					
Clark North A	246.00	199.00	124.00	70.00	29.00	22.00	6.00				
Concepcion	288.00	240.00	166.00	111.00	70.00	66.00	47.00	41.00			
San Miguel	340.00	292.00	221.00	167.00	126.00	120.00	100.00	97.00	54.00		
Tarlac	362.00	313.00	241.00	186.00	146.00	139.00	123.00	117.00	75.00	19.00	

CLASS 3 (Heavy Vehicles) 4.00

Type	Type	Dinalupihan	Hacienda	Porac	Clark South	Clark Logistics	Clark North B	Clark North A	Concepcion	San Miguel	Tarlac
Type											
Dinalupihan	72.00										
Hacienda	183.00	111.00									
Porac	264.00	193.00	81.00								
Clark South	326.00	254.00	124.00	61.00							
Clark Logistics	339.00	264.00	153.00	72.00	10.00						
Clark North B	360.00	289.00	177.00	96.00	35.00	25.00					
Clark North A	369.00	298.00	186.00	105.00	44.00	34.00	9.00				
Concepcion	431.00	360.00	249.00	167.00	105.00	99.00	71.00	62.00			
San Miguel	510.00	444.00	332.00	251.00	189.00	179.00	155.00	146.00	81.00		
Tarlac	544.00	470.00	361.00	280.00	219.00	208.00	184.00	175.00	113.00	28.00	

[1]For Lost and/or Damaged Card, the motorist has to pay for the farthest distance plus the cost of the Smart Card and incidental cost

The above toll fees are based on the audited Project Cost as of December 31, 2007.
Any interested user of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway shall have the right to file within a period of ninety (90) days after the date of publication of this Notice, a petition with the Toll Regulatory Board (2/F Integrated Bar of the Philippines Building, Doña Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City) for a review of the above toll fees.

SO ORDERED, Pasig City, April 9, 2008.

BY AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(SGD) MANUEL S. IMPERIAL
Executive Director
Toll Regulatory Board

Quintoses file 2nd plea in murder case

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE PEOPLE OF ANOTHER Quinson brother is seeking the reversal of the Court of Appeals' decision acquitting former Misamis Occidental Rep. Jose Villaroza and three others in the Quinson double murder case.

Earlier, the parents of Michael E. Quinsoy, Paul's younger brother, made the same plea.

In a partial motion for reconsideration, Paul's wife said the appellate court ignored evidence that would have shown the participation of the four in the 1997 murders of the Quinsoy brothers.

The Quinson family argued the appellate court should not have decided on the case because they were still appealing the Supreme Court ruling that denied their motion to have Justice Noel Tijam inhibit himself from the case.

After eight years of trial, Quinson City Regional Trial Court Judge Ma. Theresa Dales found Villaroza and his co-accused guilty of double murder and sentenced them to death.

But the appellate court, in a decision penned by Tijam, reversed the murder convictions of Villaroza and Jaimee Ruben Madriaga, Gilbert Bantilan and Marlo Tobias, but upheld the guilty verdicts on Farmers Eduardo Hermoso, Marcelito Mantilla and Jesse Ungpol.

The appellate court ruled that Hermoso's extrajudicial confession implicating all seven accused in the killings was admissible, but it would not be used to convict the former lawmaker and the three others since it was uncorroborated by other evidence.

The brothers were sons of Villaroza's political rival, former Misamis Occidental Gov. Ricardo Quinson.

Paul's heirs said the appellate court focused on Hermoso's extrajudicial confession made before the National Bureau of Investigation, where he had made another confession, and a judicial one, before the Manifestation Municipal Trial Court.

"There was also plenty of evidence to prove the four men's involvement in the crime, they pointed out.

"Moreover, what is frustrating and clearly erroneous is the ignorance of this Honorable Court of the rather strong evidence of the appellees showing the conspiracy between the appellees in the killing of Paul and Michael Quinson," they said.

Evidence ignored

Among those not considered by the court, they said, was the fact that Hermoso and Mantilla were Villaroza's political followers and illegal occupants of the Quinsoys' Golden Country Farms Inc.

They also insisted that Villaroza was present at the October 1997 meeting of the conspirators on the killing, and that Villaroza had given money to the families of Hermoso, Mantilla and Bantilan.

Villaroza had barricaded for Mantilla when the latter was being arrested during a congressional hearing, they said, while another accused, Orlando Bantilan, was employed by Villaroza's wife.

Paul's heirs said Jimmee had issued a confession that interlocked with Hermoso's. Since Hermoso's and Jimmee's confessions corroborated each other, they bolstered the guilt of all seven accused, they said.

But this circumstantial evidence was ignored by the court, they said.

"From the foregoing, the Appellees humbly submit that the acquittal of the Appellees Villaroza and his cohorts was incorrectly and that the decision of the Honorable Court is marred with grave abuse of discretion," they said.

Japanese police find Filipino woman's head

By Tarra Quismundo

TOKYO POLICE have recovered the severed head of a Filipino woman reported missing earlier this month, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

The DFA said Japanese police arrested on Friday the missing head of Rosalinda Batilla Kamimuura, 32, from a canal near her Tokyo apartment. Police had earlier found parts of her dismembered body in an apartment in Odaiba and in a locker in Shinjuku station, the foreign office said.

Tokyo Police arrested 48-year-old Japanese national Hisashi Suzuki last week in connection with the grisly slaying of Kamimuura, a food service worker in the Philippine Consulate-General in Tokyo.

Suzuki was arrested while reportedly trying to sell his car to a Tokyo street. A car worker told police about Suzuki after seeing him in possession of a body part in his apartment, it was reported earlier.

Police also found in Suzuki's possession a key to a locker where a body part was found.

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The Daily Gospel

Monday, April 14, 2008
4th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 11:1-18
Gospel: Jn 10:11-18

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. But the hired hand, or any other person who is not the shepherd and owns not the sheep, sees the wolf coming, then lets the wolf snatch and scatter the sheep. This is because the hired hand works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father. Because of this I give my life for my sheep.

"I have other sheep that are not of this fold. These I have to lead as well, and they shall listen to my voice. Then there will be one flock, one shepherd. For the Father loves me because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down freely. It is mine to lay down and to take up again; this mission I received from my Father."

Commentary:

In the days of Jesus the shepherd took great pride in his flock. He identified the hired shepherds as those who could never justify ownership for many generations before him. The shepherd was there when the lambs were born, and he guarded the sheep from anything that could harm them. With all ownership inside the shepherd could never claim a hired hand. Often, most of their sheep would die sheep hired to put his own life at risk so that the sheep might have life and have it in abundance.

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Scientists find rare species of mangrove

From page A1

researchers, told the Inquirer.

Saitou, who is pursuing a doctoral degree in marine science at the University of Queensland in Australia, said the species was so rare that there was only one tree found on Nosay Island in Eastern Visayas.

He and his professor, Dr. Norman Duke, are studying the taxonomy of mangrove ecology in the Philippines and Australia. Duke is a principal research fellow of the University of Queensland's Centre for Marine Studies.

Saitou said he and Duke found 12 trees of the mangrove species Or has no local name yet in a few-hectare mangrove-forested island (where no other vegetation except mangroves are found) called Bikadlay Binadalen residents.

The island is some 5.4 kilometers from the mainland. From afar, it seems to be a pure stand of dolosan Adale and dolosan Sera, according to Saitou.

"Doctor Duke, however, noticed some mangrove trees of this species with albino trees. At closer look, the leaves are greener. Upon collecting specimens and evaluating in Brunei, he confirmed that it was a mangrove hybrid called Rhizophora x lamarckii produced by dolosan Adale and dolosan Sera," Saitou said.

He said he and Duke found only a single tree of the species on Nosay Island. In Maralico, however, they saw at least 12 trees. The species can be found in other countries, like India, but it is also very drove, Saitou said.

Protect parent plants

The newly discovered mangrove species has an average diameter of 0.3 centimeters and height of 40 meters.

"The findings can be considered the first record of such species in Luzon. As hybrids are sterile, they cannot reproduce. The only way to conserve it is to protect the population of its parent plants," Saitou said.

He said local officials and the community were not aware of the existence of the rare species in their midst.

"We informed Governor Mayor Jesus Edera about it and he said the local government would declare the site a marine protected area. We also ordered an immediate patrol in the area," Saitou said.

The two researchers were looking for study sites to compare natural and planted mangroves when they found in Masinloc a natural mangrove area with environmental characteristics similar to those found in Lingayen Gulf. They found Saba with the help of local officials and fishermen.

"It was difficult to find natural sites as intact, if not all, areas have been severely disturbed or degraded. Natural mangroves in the Philippines are very rare now given the massive cutting and conversion to aquaculture ponds. The Philippines already has 70 to 80 percent of its natural mangroves," Saitou said.

Special place

Saba can be considered a special place and is different from other mangroves because it is located in a natural environment where mangroves developed over a long period, the researcher said. While there were some observed cuttings and encroachments, the area can still be considered relatively undisturbed, he said.

"It is being used by locals as a docking place when they go fishing. The surrounding water is a rich fishing ground for small fishermen," Saitou said.

He said elder residents in Masinloc told him that the mangrove-forested island had been existing "since the time they were born or arrived in a fishing place by Filipino soldiers during World War II, he said.

The study, which Saitou and Duke are undertaking, aims to understand the environmental factors of mangrove areas conversed to other uses. They also want to find out how long planted mangroves would resemble the forest structure of natural mangroves.

Saitou said the study would give conservationists and environmental managers a "realistic picture" of how much mangrove planting projects can achieve over a certain period.

The study is timely, considering the extent of mangrove clearing in the country and the various efforts at rehabilitating mangrove areas through massive planting projects, he said. Its sites for the intended mangroves have been designated in the western part of Lingayen Gulf, covering the towns of Bolinao, Anda and Sual and Alaminos City, where Saitou spent 12 years of research.

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SEOUL FREE AND EASY

'Swine program borrowers may be known'

By Jocelyn R. Uy

EBELSBERG: THE position taken by Mahalaxmy, the Office of the Ombudsman has maintained that the state-run Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor) is a credit and guarantee corporation and is therefore not covered by the bank secrecy law.

Assistant Ombudsman Mich Encabo said recently, leaving the names of those who obtained loans under the government's swine raising program was necessary to Quedancor's clients.

Section 14 of the public Act No. 7393, which created Quedancor, tasks the governing board of the corporation with submitting to the President, Congress, Department of Finance, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Agriculture and Government Corporate Monitoring and Coordinating Committee an annual report of its operations.

This includes audited financial statements in the form of statements of assets and liabilities, income statements or statements of income and expenditures.

RA 7393 also says Quedancor shall also submit an analysis of its surplus or deficit and other additional information relative to financial conditions and operations such as outstanding domestic and foreign borrowings and appropriations needed for reserve capital requirements."

"From the provision, it is evident the reliance of the source of the borrowers or lenders by Quedancor is permitted by its own charter," said Jolandoni in an interview with the Inquirer.

Ghost deliveries

The 2005 Commission on Audit report said the Department of Agriculture and Quedancor were involved in the P1.1 billion ghost deliveries of swine to marginalized farmers two years ago.

It also said four companies—Shinn Liong Seeds Inc., BBRS Agri-Livestock Corp., New Gold Agri-Vet Co. and Silver Rock Resources Corp.—received the bulk of the swine funds.

Last week, Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol said Quedancor could not be compelled to reveal the names of its borrowers because of bank secrecy laws.

But the Ombudsman understood that Quedancor was a credit and guarantee company, not a banking institution.

Jolandoni added that Quedancor was established with a capital stock of P2 billion, of which 50 percent was for government subscription and all payments for farmers, fisherfolk and private investors.

Public interest

"The funds of the said corporations are likewise imbued with public interest," he said.

Jolandoni also said the assigned body has been quietly investigating Quedancor even before COA released its annual report in September 2006.

Records of the Ombudsman showed that it initiated the investigation of the purported agriculture fraud on some 18 officials of the agency and chief executive officer, Helen Buenaflor, was named the main respondent in the two complaints filed before the Ombudsman. Its president and chief executive officer, Helen Buenaflor, was named the main respondent in the two complaints.

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HOME APPLIANCES

Frustrations over coups, people power

Front page A1

martial law regime, or elected, such as that of the immensely popular Joseph Estrada administration.

By contrast, the coup d'état is clearly illegal under the 1987 Constitution of the restored Philippine democracy. Coup d'état is severely punished by the Constitution, but the punishment has not been faithfully carried out in judicial decisions on various military rebellions since 1986.

Court decisions have been leniently construed by a weak state afraid of a backlash from the military establishment, whose loyalty to civilian authorities has always been in doubt during political crises and transitions.

In stronger states, rebellious dialog a state of national emergency are gravely regarded as treason calling for summary execution of culprits by firing squad.

Change from below

People power embodies the concept of "change from below," based on the will of the mass. As a grassroots-driven movement or rule from the bottom up, it collides head-on with coup d'état, which is driven by a few, the elite of the officer corps, and is based not on ideologically and historically elitist, antidemocratic and bureaucratic institutions, whose instinct is to crush popular street movements.

The coup attempts of 1987 and 1989 during the Aquino administration and in People Power 2 in 2001, the Oakwood mutiny of 2003, the 2006 Marines standoff on Nort Road, facts that provoked the declaration of a national emergency and the seizure last year of the Wenceslao Manila hotel by the Oakwood mutineers on trial on coup charges have produced a series of responses and interventions from the military establishment.

Although the intervention in People Power 2 (withdrawal of military support from the Estrada administration) was in support of the mass demand for the removal of Estrada, the decision of the military high command led by then chief of staff, Gen. Angelo Reyes, underlined the fact that the action was made by a small military elite [the chain of command of service commanders—no less a force in reality].

Cabal of generals

This junta made the crucial decision to abandon the Estrada administration in the light of its elitist perception that the mobilization at EDSA could lead to violence, a mob assault on the palace and disorders that might cause public instability.

That the withdrawal led to the collapse of the Estrada administration and severed civil disorder does not detract from the fact that the move led to a counterclassical decision in the transfer of power and that it was a decision made from the top down by a cabal of generals.

The military decision by a tiny military elite, who commanded the state's monopoly of the organs of coercion, epitomized the architecture of the notion of power from the top, although that decision enlisted an apparently broad-based clamor at EDSA II, for the removal of Estrada. It represented the triumph of bureaucratically driven decisions, although it coincided with the widespread demand for change from the multitudes at EDSA.

Fortunately, for political stability, there was a coincidence between the interests of the military-bureaucratic elite and the clamor of the grassroots in the streets, but such coincidences seldom happen to avoid turbulent transfer of power.

Dangerous swing

Despite these reminiscences, leaving the resolution of crises endangering political stability to the discretion of a tiny bureaucratic elite represents a dangerous swing against popular-driven movements. The swing is underlined by the tendency toward resolving recurrent political crises by bureaucratic top-down decisions as differentiated from bottom-up resources, leading to grassroots grievances.

There is a tendency by the crisis-prone government to resolve crises by reliance on security forces and the military to crack down on people power movements—which are expressions of grievances from the grassroots. These crackdown and repressive measures have cut off and isolated the government from the people.

The upsurge of people power movements is a symptom of this overall, and the people are expressing this alienation and disenchantment in these sporadic movements.

Backlash

It must not be forgotten that People Power was a powerful revolt of the masses against the tyranny of government from the top-down approach under the long Marcos dictatorship backed by the bureaucratic-military apparatus.

Marcos relied heavily on bureaucratic institutions, particularly the military and the technocracy, which were entrusted to administer and exercise methods (rather than on popular-based and consensus-seeking political institutions, such as parliament and political parties, although they were undermined by the fact that the National Assembly was controlled from the top by the single-party rule of Marcos' Kilusang Bagong Lipunan).

A similar structure has been enforced and is now in place. The call for "consensual action" by the Cardinal Sin and the proliferation of people power movements are symptoms of a backlash against high-handed bureaucratic solutions.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 23 No. 128

OPINION

Have an opinion? Send your feedback (required: a phone number) by text message to 0917 5300111 or 0915 9999111

Alternative reality

APPARENTLY, THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN the Philippines is just lovely—if Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita is to be believed. The former general and ex-congressman has set great store by the applause his presentation received at the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva the other day.

EDITORIAL

"We felt that we were on Cloud 9," an ecstatic Ermita said by telephone. "It was very encouraging. I didn't expect it ... I was told that presenters are not usually accorded that privilege."

We presume that by "that privilege" he means applause that could be open for the home audience as both approved and prized. But perhaps the audience was merely entertained?

Human rights lawyer Edre Olalia said other Filipinos searching the briefing by Ermita and other administration officials were "appalled by the obsolete presentation of baseless lies, spins and out-of-this-world made-to-order."

After all, even the King of Spain can be persuaded to bail President Macapagal-Arroyo, during whose term political killings have risen to new record highs, as a champion of human rights. Who is to say members of the UN Human Rights Council can't be as gullible?

Rayan Mutas Rep. Teodoro Casiño said he "nearly fell" off his seat after he heard Ermita present what he called a "totally non-sided depiction" of the human rights situation in Davao.

"I almost fell from my seat listening to him expound on government efforts to strengthen the Ombudsman and Sandiganbayan, the success of its electronic procurement system and effectivity of its lifestyle checks." [He meant "effectiveness."]

Granted, Casiño et al. are not exactly an easy sense with the Arroyo administration. It is difficult to imagine the Bayan Muna party-list group, for instance, praising the Arroyo administration for anything having to do with human rights, especially before an international forum. But it should be easy enough to compare the true situation with Ermita's alternative reality.

Of the hundreds of political killings that have stained the countryside since 2001, how many have been truly solved? (The police definition of a solved crime—the mere filing of a case—is patently absurd and pathetically inadequate.) Of those who have been forcibly abducted, in politically motivated disappearances, how many have been returned to safety? (The case of Jonas Burgos, who disappeared from a crowded mall, continues to haunt the national conscience.) Of the many pointed proposals of the Alston report, how many have been accepted and put into effect? (To this day, Ermita and other administration officials continue to deny the balance and comprehensiveness of the report, prepared by UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston, when it was the administration itself that invited the United Nations in the first place.)

The fundamental finding of the Alston mission was that the administration's own counter-insurgency policy was responsible for a climate of fear and a culture of impunity which have claimed the lives of hundreds of victims. (Even the extrajudicial killings in the cities of Davao and Cebu, while not politically motivated in the usual sense, have benefited from the same climate, the same culture.)

To be sure, brave steps have been taken, to defend potential victims, to fight back against human rights abuses. How telling, though, that the Ermita presentation did not highlight the Supreme Court's introduction of new legal remedies, such as the writ of amparo. Perhaps that was because ruffling attention to the crisis in extrajudicial killings which led to the remedies would have dulled some of the presentation's made-for-export, lemonaid sense of its overwhelmed value.

Unfortunately for all of us, the Arroyo administration is a most pragmatic operating; it will use whatever works, and a public relations blitz based on the "encouraging" applause the Philippine government's presentation in Geneva received will work, if it can be successfully substituted for actual performance. Why go through the arduous hard work of prosecuting officials accused of human rights abuses when the administration can simply announce it is doing so—and judge its own performance by the applause it generates?

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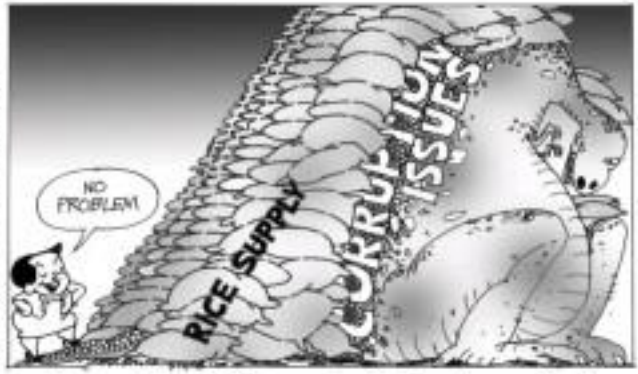

Buyer of lost NPC mural a Cabinet member?

HERE'S THE LATEST SCUTTLEBUTT ON THE Mamasapano mural lost in the National Press Club building:

It is true that the buyer of the lost Mamasapano mural is a Cabinet member in the Arroyo administration.

It is true that the true buying price for the mural was P10 million, not the P30 million at first officially reported by the NPC Officers of the NPC said the P30 million was deposited intact with the Philippine National Bank. The mural, which bears the accurate, discovered, however, that only P600,000 remains in the account. $1 million had been spent for the NPC election and another $1 million for a subsistence stand which was, however, removed from the NPC office the embarrassment it caused. The Overall assessment Review Committee System and the NPC members want to know what happened to the missing P9,000,000.

Is it is not clear the real broker in the sale is on side of the Cabinet member?

It is true that the officials of Bulacan co-operated in the qualified theft case, and some NPC board members want to turn state witness!

Is it true that a Chinoy, an operator in the Business of Cocoanuts and operator of several nightspots, is running for president of the NPC? Is it also true that at least two of the 8 workers in his original ticket have withdrawn and are now running on the rival ticket?

Don't know the answers. So you?

* * *

Time is logic—and justice—in the moves of the Arroyo administration to raise the price of rice subsidized by the National Food Authority. NFA rice is sold at P18.23 per kilo. NFA now buys palay at P27 a kilo. After milling, the resulting rice already costs P34 a kilo. That means the government loses P11.75 per kilo of rice sold.

Imported rice now costs about the same, including freight costs, yet the NFA continues to sell them at P18.23 per kilo. That means the government loses nothing—indeed, it gets rice every year, an amount it cannot afford.

On the other hand, the cheapest commercial rice costs an average of P36 a kilo. The difference in price of a commercial kilo of NFA rice is so big that opportunistic people, from the poorest in those living in Rizal Park, as well as unscrupulous rice traders, join the long queues to take advantage of the cheap rice. Also because of fears of a shortage, families buy more than they need. This is obvious in the queues where members of the same family, including small children, line up to buy the cheap NFA rice. Unfortunately, the NFA has no way of stopping this practice, nor of limiting the sale of subsidized rice only to poor families. At this rate, the NFA will soon run out of stocks. And when that happens, commercial rice prices will rise even higher.

Ironically, even the poor take advantage of the situation. They buy many times their need (that's what always happens when there is rationing) and sell the excess at a profit to opportunistic rice traders who then sell them in commercial rice. The hard-pressed taxpayers pay for the unintended profits of the rice traders.

The only way to stop the flow of cheap rice between NFA rice and commercial rice, so that there is no panic buying. But what about the poor? They cannot afford the higher prices.

The government must find a way to subsidize these consumers in a way like giving them discounts and rebate booklets, like those given to senior citizens. But this should be done by family, not individually, so that would reward big families and promote population explosion. And this distribution should be done not through the regular NFA outlets but through the church parishes where the procedure will hopefully be more honest and strict.

* * *

The long and bitter fight over the P14.68-billion Mt. Malindol Wing hookup and Lean Area-motion (Inc. (MIPHILAI), a coalition of more than 250,000 retired and active soldiers and policemen, has become the biggest exhibition of the election of Col. Ricardo Velasco Jr., along with seven others as new directors of the MIPHILAI board on Jan. 16, 2006 when it rescued. Not did not act, on the urgent motion seeking to annul the results of the said elections filed by a rival group. The groups headed by Velasco and Col. Lyndo S. Mosay (ret.) are fighting for control of MIPHILAI.

"Now that the highest court of the land has spoken," Velasco said, "our members can concentrate on the viable and efficient management of the MIPHILAI's funds by the duly elected officers. No less than the high court has affirmed our mandate and extended the trust of those who voted in our office. We can now put this legal problem to rest."

"MIPHILAI is in normal operations and the incumbent members of the board of trustees are determined to protect the interests of all its members who have invested their hard-earned money in the savings and loan association," added Velasco, who serves as chair and president of the soldiers' fund.

With the decision, the Supreme Court, in effect, validated the election of eight additional directors to complete the 15-member MIPHILAI board of trustees. Elected last Jan. 19 were Velasco, Thaddeus Tenorio Bonilla, Moraldo Riewaldo, Jamale Abad, Ricardo Perido, Angel Tapay, Antonio Bonifacio and Conso Bolodeano.

Three night directors, together with the three elected in 2006—Jolando Castañeda, Didoor Mendoza and Cirilo Reyes—now compose the 15-member board of trustees.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: Modern thinkers now believe that Adam and Eve were Filipinos.

Why?

Because they had no home, no jobs, nothing decent to wear, no rice, and still they were and multiplied.

Historic

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"THIS IS THE FIRST DOCTRINE AND THE first conviction for coup d'etat in the Philippines," crows State Prosecutor Jean Bydo Marcos. "The state of facts made history in itself."

The state of course are Mrs Misamis camps, Senator Gamboa and seven others who mounted the Oakwood Mutiny in July 2003. Judge Oscar Pimentel of Makati gave Marcos camps and Gamboa 40 years in prison for leading the mutiny and the others taken from 6 to 12 years for participating in it.

Antonio Trillanes and company smell something fishy, and it's not just their noses to blame. Marcos camps and Gamboa, like many in the Oakwood Mutiny in July 2003,

An invitation to Court greatness

IN MY LAST COLUMN ON THE SEC DECISION I singled out what I considered the most dangerous part of the decision, namely its treatment of executive privilege. It appeared that in giving the President a free hand in deciding what matters are covered by executive privilege, it did not even bother to determine what precisely the President was claiming as covered by executive privilege. That is the question that has confused the rest of the Senate but one of other investigating bodies. In addition the Court also surrendered its own authority to decide whether a claim of privilege is valid or not. It is complete surrender to the President.

There are many those who say that the Court, pressured mainly by Arroyo appointees, is caressing up for the reminders of the President. I would not go so far. But the decision certainly gives the impression that the basis has reasons which cannot in some filing to understand or even question.

The reason for that can be gathered from the history of the provision when it first appeared in the 1935 Constitution. It was a special provision to department heads based on the recognition that department heads did not enjoy the same rights as the members of Congress.

Investigations under Section 21, like the Neri hearing, are not bound by such requirements. It is one that Senator Drilon suggested it. Nor is it one that, a suggestion, even if a reasonable suggestion.

Senator Drilon seemed to be more sensitive to the autonomy of the Senate than Neri's Senate Committee is. What was a suggestion to Senator Drilon has been made an imperative obligation by Neri's Senate Committee. This is another instance into the domain of the Senate.

How about the requirement of the publication of rules for hearings? There is no doubt that publication of rules is a constitutional requirement. The requirement was not found in the 1935 Constitution. But that matter, under the 1935 Constitution that the of legislative investigations was just recognized as an implicit power. The power first became explicit under the 1973 Constitution which also made explicit the requirement that the rights of witnesses be respected and that the rules be published.

Having said that, however, we must still ask how the rules should be published. The Constitution does not say how. Certainly with the development of the technology of communication today only those are valid which are published in widely circulated media of information. Publication in the manner is one of them.

But must the rules be published every time that new witnesses are invited every time panel? Investigations not republished every time there is a new Congress. Members are ordinarily republished. Does the material law presidential decision remain until repealed by Congress or declared unconstitutional.

Thus, during the period between the expiration of the term of one Congress and the swearing in of the newly elected senators the remaining 12 senators cannot do business. But why should such fact have the effect of abolishing rules previously promulgated? Such rules should disappear only if repealed by the newly elected Senators.

Finally there must be a stage of colonial hangover when there is understanding administrative American jurisprudence on executive privilege. American jurisprudence on executive privilege grew out only out of the American ethos but also out of what Holmes called the necessarily "grand ambiguities" of the American constitutional text. The Philippine constitutional text contains explicit provisions on transparency and official accountability which do not appear in the Americans text.

It is understandable if the Court should allow American jurisprudence to supervene over official wrongdoing when the Philippine constitutional text as well as the Philippine public are screaming for transparency and accountability. That is an attitude understandable in Malacañang proper but shocking to the reasonable mind, but it of before the Court.

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

The Court can draw steadily or even dispense with its own rules. What is good for the goose should be good for the gander.

How about the requirements that in summoning witnesses the Senate should review the reasons why it intends to ask? Does it follow that a discussion should be made between hearings under Sections 21 and 22 of Article VI. Section 22, which deals with the oversight function of Congress, imposes that requirement when Congress questions department heads.

The reason for that can be gathered from the history of the provision when it first appeared in the 1935 Constitution. It was a special provision to department heads based on the recognition that department heads did not enjoy the same rights as the members of Congress. This is another instance into the domain of the Senate.

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The ultimate treason

WHEN THE SPRATLY EXPLORATION DEAL was linked to the MRR project and other mega-projects, the rash of corruption was exposed to have a more serious dimension—treason by selling out.

But hidden in the voluminous pages of another ten-billion-peso agreement is the motive of all schemes: the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA). Once ratified, it will begin the process of the ultimate sell-out of national sovereignty: to get the money from Japan. What would we want to enjoy equal rights with Filipinos to exploit the land and waters of an internationally recognized national resources right—and ultimately to own land and corporations.

There is no need to dig up damning evidence of the sellout from other documents or to extract it from witnesses. It is right there, in texts.

Loss of Philippine sovereignty. The JPEPA would violate Philippine sovereignty in other ways that the people's constitutional right to participate in economic decision-making. It usurps the legislature's constitutional power to exercise authority over investments and trade. An example is the unconditional elimination of tariff protection within 10 years. This would result in the much-increased inflow of aggressively priced Japanese goods, thereby killing the livelihood of our economy—our small and medium enterprises, which are the largest employers in the private sector. More unemployment would follow.

The JPEPA also usurps the constitutional powers of our local government units (LGUs) to enact local ordinances, including the power to create their own revenue sources. Would legislative debates on investments will no longer be possible with the minimal and strong reservations or exemptions the Philippine panel made and Japan's revised version's counter-reservations to investors.

The JPEPA also violates the Philippine peace pact signed between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The MILF agreement is the basis for the creation of the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity (BJE), which will have its own basic law, police force, and revenue sources. The BJE will have the power to exercise Philippine Islamic laws, taxes, and other powers that allow for national legislation.

The Japanese envoy to the Philippines has expressed the desire to promote Philippine-Islamic laws and agreements that allow for national legislation.

COMMENTARY

Ester V. Perez de Tagle

on feasibility or "investments ... made in accordance with the legislation of that contracting state." The Japan in does beyond the reach of Philippine legislation, powers or future.

It even plans to "examine the possibility of amending or repealing laws and regulations that pertain to, or affect the implementation and operation of these agreements." (Sec. 11) Philippine sovereignty for the good of our people but would be amended or repealed to accommodate the Japan.

National Treatment (Art. 89) accords the Japanese investors equal rights as Filipinos in the establishment or acquisition of businesses. It would be open season for our precious lands and waters, with Japan getting the first shot! How many companies will it have apologized for the attention it commanded against our people during World War II. Worse, it would be open season for our resources—and lack of the same under this provision unrecognized.

Annex 7, 29 of Japan would allow Japanese cargo-scale fishing in our already badly depleted seas. Which economies of scale, duck to-scale local fishermen would not survive. Japan would be free to export our agricultural and agro products. The plight of the Bataklan farmers would be replicated many times over. Many of the farmers' land and wages, which should be used to plant food crops, could be used by the Japanese to plant biofuel feedstock for their energy needs, thus endangering our food and water security. Power deregulation would be mandated. The Japan Bank for International Cooperation Projected by Sec. 96, the Japanese could pursue their manufacturing processes to prevent us from commercially using our own resources. Japan provides neither sufficient safeguards to protect our country's rich bio-resources nor provisions on access and benefit sharing.

Japan is one of the countries that signed with the study status guaranteed by its high industrialization. An 40 Tokyo 1998 news report says "Japan has a new export for the world—garbage. Export of hazardous materials is banned by international conventions. But Japanese are not calling it something else" Exports and welfare ministry official Tetsuro Ikeuchi confirmed this, saying, "There is an objective definition to dispose waste from goods." In the Japan Tariff Code, waste is listed as "Waste and scrap of precious metal or metal clad with precious metal and other waste and scrap containing precious metal or these principally used for the recovery of precious metal." Japan is one of the countries that signed with the study status guaranteed by its high industrialization. An 40 Tokyo 1998 news report says "Japan has a new export for the world—garbage. Export of hazardous materials is banned by international conventions. But Japanese are not calling it something else" Exports and welfare ministry official Tetsuro Ikeuchi confirmed this, saying, "There is an objective definition to dispose waste from goods." In the Japan Tariff Code, waste is listed as "Waste and scrap of precious metal or metal clad with precious metal and other waste and scrap containing precious metal or these principally used for the recovery of precious metal."

Articles 15 and 16 on the only rule the Japanese were given than Filipinos, they also open our government to multimillion dollar suits. Article 83 prohibits the Philippines from imposing on Japanese investments any technology transfer and any hiring of Filipinos. The Philippines will be prohibited from requirements rules countries. So, what benefits do our people get from the deal? Free our money, supposedly aiming to boost beneficiaries, reject it. Philippine Nikkei Association president Yuji Suzuki welcomed the JPEPA. She was wrong. Japanese, like Japan's Christian pastors, deny to give injustice to the Filipino people.

The Japan shows what happens when the greed for wealth and power blinds governments to what is right and turns them into predators. But the seven predators are closer who can against their own land and people.

Ester V. Perez de Tagle is the founder of Concerned Citizens for Truth and Justice. She was a member of the congressional JMCs of several investments/contracts which became law.

The 2010 Movement

THE DAY-SAVE FOR THE MAKE OF DECLARATION, that the country since 2005, has been divided into three camps, according to the survey. Half of the country opposes the President. However, that 50 percent is divided into smaller chunks on the issue of what to do about the President. Another quarter of the population will stick by the President to the hell or high water. And the remaining quarter of the population calls itself neutral, but is more like, it is to support the President, when push comes to shove, at least until 2010 and perjuring, all the while, that it has no love for her.

The effect of this split is that the President's solid 25 percent support ends up hallowing to 50 percent because of the supposedly reluctant—but sure—endorsement of the 25 percent who are "neutral", while the 50 percent against the threshold of the President to what to do. In effect all the President has to do is keep the 25 percent that are "neutral" on her side. By repeatedly insisting she'll step down on June 30, 2010, for example I and plenty of her critics agree such a step would ing to be classic example of brain-dead statesmanship.

Do not forget that people have ended up like the members of World War I, when neither side like Mexand the Central Powers) could figure out how to win, but could still prevent the other side from achieving victory. From time to time, one would be tempted to launch a final offensive only to find that it temporarily took sides relied on a war of attrition—the most wasteful and most destructive and position kind of warfare—to prevent the other side's victory. Is it any wonder the story of America is full the names of numerous to the dead here.

Opponents of the President, out of frustration, have taken to heart the slogan the 25 percent who are "neutral" by challenging their claims to neutrality and pointing out their's a great deal of justice that they have invested a 2010 Movement which is dedicated to the proposition that President's love just until her current term expires.

But a deeper exploration of what the supposedly neutral mass points to how a portion of that group that they have presumed to support the effort to

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

hold the President accountable when it comes—while she's in office.

As she knows, she is the subject of the 25 percent who can always be relied effectively supporting the President six times things. The first is a fear of outright bashing of the President's critics. The second is a fear of the unforeseen consequences of another People Power, including the possibility that the opposition fundamentalists would get swept. The third is related to the second: that the perfected method for removing a controversial chief executive should be impeachment.

For long believed that to bring down's even the President legal forms of impeachment, many people whether already publicly against the President or who have their's neutral, would prefer the method to any other to hold the President accountable. Therefore, we're looking at two opportunities to end the crisis: twelve and break the impasse, the impeachment in October of this year or the Next year trying to change our form of government to give herself some time or politics for just 20 it.

Those who don't want to take the risk of a revolution will support a genuine impeachment effort the President. Since it behoves a majority of the political and public impeachment, I support this move.

Indeed, there's a chance the constitutionally sound option of impeachment could take place even earlier.

Say Teodoro Locsin Jr. in his "House overall a no-confidence ruling on executive privilege," published on March 17, had an interesting point, the following: "The House votes on impeachment charges creating contending constellations of stigma because complaints are normally elaborate and concrete. Congress refuses to vote on the Supreme Court should choose the value the former Speaker of the House himself dismissed as 'a stock complaint' filed for purposes of intimidating the President from the greatest article. "On my shore he pointed out that a case filed by Rep. Rodolfo Fortuno is pending in the Supreme Court, and that Fortunowho, if there's one play executive privilege isn't in to indeed, period, it's in the impeachment process.

The impeachment prior to October and second ing to make rational rules depends on the Supreme Court, which has been ruling on Representative Fortuno's case. The ruling requires that it should votes to take action in the Quirino-era impeachment procedure, which required processing evidence line before tackling the acceptability of the charges. That deprive himself opened up those lawsuits to the House, and didn't invoke executive privilege in another many? In the meantime, should or proposal I've long supported is for a Special House action who would essentially do the preliminary investigation of the Presidency, on behalf of the House.

So it's not a matter of many options for opposition—it's down to three: prompt strategy between now and October; or pressure the House to redress itself by amending its impeachment rules to make them rational; or pass legislation establishing a Special Prosecutor appointed by the House to do preliminary investigation on impeachable complaints, and for the Supreme Court to resolve the Zamora case to solidify the "impeach me" strategy favored by Blair Sheerlock. The refusal of the House and Supreme Court to budge or draw down dance will leave no room for those of thirty-three institutions to—literally—do the justice of the people.

But until then, the critics of the President will have seven years respect for a minority view—the "neutral" 25 percent—and given more chance for our institutions are only to work, but to strengthen them so that when the next crisis comes—and during over my child succession—any president, now or in the future. Because if this effort fails, a revolt to invite Palace will then gamble on trying to control its way.

Remembering an act of betrayal

LAST TUESDAY MORE OF THE FINEST YOUNG MEN OF our country were sentenced to various jail terms under the Arroyo criminal justice system. They were accused of taking part in a failed coup attempt against the government by setting the Oakwood hotel in Makati on July 27, 2003.

Let me make a few observations.

Under the Arroyo criminal justice system, former Commodore Benjamin Magsaysay has not been charged with any crime resulting from the P1.3-billion fertilizer scandal in which he sold by the Supreme Court as "illegal, imprudent and heavy" and which "not only favored no-bid legal and jurisprudence norms but also cast serious doubts upon the good faith body's capacity on executive summoned witnesses." And so we had Virgilio Garcil.

Under the Arroyo criminal justice system, the Filipino former Lieut PCGB million in fertilizer funds which figured in Commissioner Jay Jay Sedano masterminded into the pockets of politicians prior to the 2004 elections. He was allowed to travel to the United States for shopping sprees around. And now we are in the midst of a rice crisis with our people—for the first time in many years—queuing up to buy limited quantities of this basic commodity!

Under the Arroyo criminal justice system, it is Rodolfo Lozada who is being hammered by the authorities for his revelations on the P70- 40M project, alleged to have been supervised by as much as $1.08 billion. Her own officials, Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Assistant Secretary Lorenzo Batumen, were in the very end praising the project as effective fraud. And now we have executive privileges as that we will never know what actions she took when Romulo then told her that Abalos had offered him P200 million for the blessings of Arroyo on the project? Has she given to actions the the signing of an agreements on the ZTE $409 deal.

But I'm big up the case of those dissidents officers for other reasons. Allow me to refresh our memories.

On July 27, 2003, some 300 officers and enlisted men, took over the Oakwood hotel in Makati City. They demanded corruption in the military service and called on President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to step down. Their leaders or, more correctly, the more prominent among them were Navy Lt. (now Senator) Antonio Trillanes IV, Capt. Gerardo Gambala, Capt. Milo Maestrecampo, Capt. Gary Alejano, and Navy Lt. Junior Lacap.

After 22 hours of negotiations with a government-appointed panel headed by former AFP chief of staff and now special envoy to the Middle East, Gen. Roy Cimatu, it was agreed that the rebels would be allowed to return to barracks, give up their arms upon arrival in New Bonifacio and surrender under the decision of Sec. This was made clear to the media and the general public.

I was not arrested or personally present and listen to the negotiations but the late Max Soliven, publisher of the Philippine Star, who was one of the negotiators, wrote about it in his column of Monday, Aug. 4, 2003.

Soliven said: "When Trillanes et al. [that the surrender of rebels would be tagged as a mutiny, which is a capital offense. Seriously recognizing the gravity there as heroes or justify their deed, certainly not this extent. But since I was in there with the negotiating group, I'll have to speak out about what was agreed...

"Being charged as civilian courts was rejected by the mutineers. They surrendered themselves to military justice, under the Articles of War.

"Military justice is what they were unanimously pledged by the government panelists—not prosecution in the regular justice system. Otherwise, they might not have surrendered. And you know the consequences of a Civilian and the detention of the rightwing they had planned all over the place.

"Who surprising women down? A surrender agreement? Of course not. But we must consider that an individual's "word of honor" is supposed to be something as a piece of paper. But after de Rossi was what was involved in the deal. Gen. Cimatu pledged himself as an officer and a gentleman, and so did the other panelists, myself included.

"So's rebels, panelists or mediators 'scam,' our worship of being given such pledges? Nonsense. Men of honor trusts those who give them, not the accused or the imprisoned. Cimatu and the government officers and officials involved should honor the deal.

"Why is it so important for the President and her government to honor this commitment? Because if it is not upheld, who knows, what 'real trouble will be provoked among the far bigger number of men (sounds) who did not participate in the so-called coup or mutiny? I did what not, they are there, waiting to see whether rebellion are mentioned and whether heads separate will roll ...

"The Chief Executive and Commander in Chief must at least show sincerity under what was stipulated in the final agreement, the Articles of War. What does Court filing of cases? Perhaps, that even falls under double jeopardy, we are a double crime.

"I repeat—the Ombudsman? Five lenders asked for leniency the their lives and even full reinstatement for their followers without having to face court martial proceedings. Real public embarrassment. But the deal on the Articles of War was clear, ly and unequivocally announced to the media and the general public.

"The military is our sister, mustering the we instigated But the military is no politicized? It's too late for that. The truth is that the military was politicized by Marcos. (In his way Ramos had a hand in it, too, even promoted to the Brazilian mandate, 'there's no way the intelligence can be appointed back into the ranks.') We will have to live for this generation with that mark today."

* * *

I sympathize with the officers who charged their jobs in "policy" and who now seek pardon, mercy and grace. I empathize with their rebels and mindset for regrets and heartbreak of people in power.

I also salute those who continue the fight against an administration that no longer recognizes publics de honor among men.

As I said in earlier columns, this nation has seen one of laws—and their rebels and mindset for regrets and heartbreak of people in power.

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE "The National Association of Philippine Newspapers"

Wonderful look at Ian's world

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE article titled "Ian's world: Autistic boy sees beauty through his point-and-shoot camera," (Inquirer, 4/6/08). That article is particularly moving to me, as I am a mother of a special child. My child is blind, everywhere we go, people gawk. Most of them are friendly, a few are not so polite.

I believe the layperson's interpretation of Ian and his special interest brings the world closer to his and other children with disabilities. Kudos to John Chua, who has made this possible, and to the Inquirer, which provided the link.

One thing of particular interest: blind people are hard to photograph. Most of them droop their heads. Will any photographer take the challenge to photograph our children? We belong to a support group of parents with visually impaired children.

—LINDA CHOE,
lachoe@manadtoo.net

Society also needs humanists, not just scientists

I WAS TROUBLED BY THE SECond editorial, titled "Misdirected interest," in the April 1 issue of the Inquirer. I hope that it was not meant to be an April fool's joke on us who are in humanities.

I hope that the editorial will not influence our decisions of high school learning drive shifting more departments that have to do with philosophy and literature, although I know it will give more connection to those advocating such a move. One government administration recently closed its philosophy department for the very same reason the editorial advanced.

We believe that we need humanists as much as we need scientists and engineers. We need people to reflect upon what it means to be human and to be Filipino, to draw attention to the way we use and misuse science and technology from different perspectives, and to make us aware of what is true, good and beautiful.

Again, I hope the Inquirer is not framing a new Dark Ages upon us, by implying that the humanities and most of the social sciences are unnecessary.

—RENATO ROXELA,
renpaul@gmail.com

We're sorry if the editorial gave you that impression. The Inquirer is also for the humanities.—Ed.

LETTERS

A waste of money

AGAIN, THE NEWSMINERS HE rarely reported a survey that found graft and corruption to be widespread in the Philippines.

The public will note that the same problems has been reported every other year and gets worse year after year even while the Office of the Ombudsman and the Commission on Audit, the government agencies constitutionally charged to fight graft and corruption, have been receiving their budgets year after year.

At this point, officials of the Ombudsman and the COA have no more excuses to stay in office; paying for their salaries and allowances has become pure and simple a waste of money.

—ISIDORO CM SAUL,
Bacoor, Cavite

Wasteful, useless planned 'solution'

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENcies are in a scramble today to come up with a plan that will "solve" the problem of rice shortage and ensuring food prices. This is in response to President Macapagal-Arroyo's announcement that 5 percent of the government's P900 billion budget, or P6 billion, will be used to address the rice crisis. But the money are only wasted, in vain at the government's feeble attempts to arrest the onset of a food crisis, and wants public resources in the process.

The P6 billion will not make a dent in the current rice crisis. There is even a big chance that the money will be pocketed by greedy officials and rice traders.

Assuming that the P6 billion will be used to buy rice from Vietnam, at most it would only be good for 100,000 metric tons at $750 per metric ton, or just 7 percent of the volume that govern-

ment wants to import, which is 2.2 million metric tons. With the government numbers for rice growers, there will not be around P69 billion in purchase 2.2 million metric tons of imported rice, and to ensure that the imported rice will still be affordable to the majority of the poor, the government will have to sell it at a subsidized price of P18 per kilo.

Instead of relying on imports, the government should invest heavily on improving local rice production, for the country to recover its vulnerability to global food supply shocks, it must return to rice self-sufficiency as a food policy.

—ARIE ULPO,
economist, Task Force Food Sovereignty,
executive director,
Integrated Rural Development Foundation Philippines,
87 Malahan St., Quezon City

Please give the side of GSIS too

I PERTAIN TO REACT TO THE APRIL 2 column of Hermogenes Gonzales...not to engage further in unnecessary backbiting, but to clarify matters having to do with what and how he wrote about the Government Service Insurance System.

When I sought objectivity from Gonzales, I never asked him to praise the GSIS to high heavens. All I asked was a measure of an effort to give the GSIS' side of issues before he gives out his frustrations. Yes, I do believe that he is a columnist, not a news writer, but columnists, news writers and even gossip writers are, more than anything else, journalists. The journalistic profession—from what little I may know of it—takes as its exception in its prescription of maintaining the cross-buttered truth-line of objectivity.

I also think that General should also be more sensitive to objectivity, especially in giving his opinion on issues/not related GSIS issues, such as the CTPL, because he is essentially a party to these issues, being the president of the National Insurance Brokers Inc. and the former president of the Association of Insurance Brokers of the Philippines. It is only fair that he must be up front with his affiliations which the public is entitled to know from a columnist advocating truth as a basis for making informed views and sound decisions.

That aside, I want to assure General that I support his opinion and I have nothing but utmost admiration for what he has accomplished as a columnist and a key player in the industry he represents. I also want to inform him that the GSIS has taken into consideration his many observations. In fact, the GSIS' continuous strong up-efforts to improve the collection of premiums and loan repayments as true members, especially members, under the sword of their benefits.

We have also adopted policies and programs that reflect our deep regard for transparency and accountability in the administration of the GSIS funds because, as General pointed out, taxpayers' money is partly used to contribute to the overall pension and life insurance fund of government employees.

—ELLA E. VALENCERINA,
vice president,
Public Affairs Office,
Government Service Insurance System,
Financial Center, Pasay City

NAVARA

Across the NATION

Sex workers smell corruption in fee

THE 8.2 KILOMETER underground river in Palawan is among 21 nominees in the search for the new nature wins of the world.

Palawan underground river in 7 new wonders search

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—THE Puerto Princesa Underground River National Park, a nature complex set in a cut karst limestone across two boats north of the city proper and has been attracting thousands of tourists every year, has made it to the list of candidates for the new 7 Wonders of the Natural search.

The city government has embarked on a campaign to make the one of 77 nominees by personal via Internet voting, and get into the second round of selection for the top 21 nature sites to be announced in January.

A second round of Internet-based voting will be held for the remaining 21 candidates starting in January next year and will culminate with the official declaration by the organizers of the New Seven Wonders of the World by year 2011.

The famous as the St. Paul's underground river, the tourist attraction is considered the longest navigable underground river in the world, measuring 8.2 kilometers of winding narrow waterways emptying into the South China Sea.

The search is organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and the nonprofit New Seven Wonders Foundation.

The same partnership also announced the "New Seven Wonders of the World" search that ended last year.

Puerto Princesa's underground river joins three other nominees from the Philippines led by the Chocolate Hills of Bohol, the Tubbataha Reefs also in Palawan and the Mayon Volcano in Bicol.

The Chocolate Hills and Tubbataha currently share the limelight in the top 10 of the list composed of nearly 200 nominees.

Anyone who has access to the Internet may cast their vote by logging into the website www.new7wonders.com. Rodrigelyn Anula, Inquirer Southern Luzon

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer General Luzon

ANGELES CITY—SOME COMmercial sex workers in this city have suspected corruption as official receipts issued by the city government for payments of smear test fee recorded only P50, not the P100 that they have actually been paying weekly since February.

"Even as some ask as prostitutes, what we do is still work. Who trade money from our labor?" a woman who wanted to be identified only as Sonia told the bosses.

The interview happened two hours before the went up the stage to dance, almost bare, before an audience of foreigners on Saturday night in one of the clubs in Fields Avenue here.

Aside and the 1/3 or so women, as dancers, make P150 nightly. The dance routines last 30 minutes female in the night-hour shift.

Going bar-fine, or offering sex through night clubs, get to earn more half of the rates that range from P1,000 to P1,500 for every customer. Jenny makes two to three bar fines a night to earn money by a source-resident mother.

"Money is hard to earn as every common woman," she said, using than male, female and gay sex workers have not been spared from the exploitation.

It is the latest issue that has hounded the city's flesh trade industry perennially suspected of engaging in sexual trafficking, illegal drugs trade and money laundering.

It is seldom that sex workers, estimated last year to be 20,000, have spoken against physical violence, health risks and labor concerns.

The P100 is mister paid routinely by the sex worker or half by the bar owners. It is not that bar owners shoulder half of the cost, it was learned.

"That's how many kilograms of rice?" said Thelma, a waitress who earns P963 a night.

The P400 monthly cost of smear test or half of that amount is disbursed from the salaries of the workers.

In the alleged collection scam, a maximum of P600,000 may have been ripped from the hard work of sex workers at Fields, at the adjacent and light district of Friendship Road, and at bars, where the so-called poor man's prostitution done upstairs.

The Inquirer arrived at the entrance based on the official figures of the Reproductive Health and Wellness Center (RHWC), which is at 400 to 600 clients daily.

The five women interviewed by the Inquirer all volunteered to the RHWC as "regulars." The former nurse of RHWC is Social Hygiene Clinic.

A recently retired bar manager, who feared the so-called irregularity from her wards, estimated the RHWC's claims as far as 3,000 weekly, increasing the amount supposedly lost to corruption at P1 million monthly.

An "original" receipt issued to one of the sources bore no watermarks for local government usually issue for their sets of receipts. The absence of watermarks indicated that the receipts could be fake.

Dr. Lucibelle Apapico, RHWC chief, said an employee of the city treasurer's office is assigned at the RHWC and issues receipts to the clients. The Inquirer had tried but failed to reach that employee for comments.

Apapico confirmed that P100 is collected. The P50 goes to the city government while the other P50 goes to the "League of Angeles City Entertainers and Managers Guests) or "separations fee."

Lacson, she said, keeps it own receipts. In cases sources said they could not recall being told that Lacson gets P50 as a share in the payments.

"It could be be that the (RHWC) collects P50. City P50 is reflected in the receipt. Our girls didn't get receipts for the P50," the retired bar manager said.

Apapico said she or the RHWC did "not collect or handle" money from the source any fee.

An Inquirer source at Fields said Lacson stays P50 from out of the "missing" P50. The P400 reportedly goes to a group identified as the Baja Group.

Cebu jeepney drivers appeal for P1.50 fare hike

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—JEEPNEY DRIVERS Peter Bolalloso, 33, saved for being home between 0900 to 2500 a day when the price of diesel was at P27 to P28 per liter in 2005.

Now, with surging fuel prices, Bolalloso's take-home earning has dwindled to a mere P80 to P100 a day.

Bolalloso, a resident of Bogo City and the vice-chair of Singkabuhayang Drayber sa Bogo (Pinaod North Bound Subsector, said the government should listen to the clamor of Cebu's public transport jeepney (PUJ) drivers to raise the minimum fare from P6 to P7.50.

While Manila drivers have been collecting P7.50 minimum fare, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) only allowed Cebu drivers to collect a P6 minimum fare since 2003.

Naybo has filed a petition for fare increase in December 2007 but the LTFRB did not act on it. The group re-filed the petition last March 14.

Accumulated increase

Bolalloso said the price increase to be filed since 2005 had already accumulated to around P12 per liter. He said from the P27/liter in 2005, diesel now costs P39.70 per liter.

Bolalloso, who plies the Mandaue-Cebu route from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., said that with the cost of living rising, the cost of his income, he said, offsets to go home to Bogo City in northern Cebu only once every two weeks to see his wife.

Bolalloso got married last 2005, and it's good, he said, that he has no children yet, pointing out that the cost of rice and other commodities have also risen drastically since 2005.

"It's feeling it very difficult to get through the day now that I don't have children yet. Imagine what would it be like for others who have a lot of children to feed," he pointed out in Cebuano.

Bolalloso is also staying at the Naybo office in Mandaue City to avoid the additional expense of renting a room.

Boldino said Nadiza, which has around 7,000 units plying mostly in Metro Cebu, is waiting for the outcome of their petition.

Boldino said Nadiza might consider a transport strike if the government will not listen to their clamor.

But commuters traveling between Cebu City and the towns and cities of Cebu province are luckier as Cebu's bus operators said they have no plan on petition for a fare hike.

Stiff competition among bus operators in Cebu had saved the passengers from the possible increase of fare.

Sich Villaberminas, president of the Cebu Provincial Bus Operators Association in Cebu (CEBOA), said that while the prices of fuel had been increasing, they could not ask for additional fare because many buses in Cebu even collect fares that are lower than what is allowed by the LTFRB.

Stiff competition

"The competition is so stiff, there is no point in asking for a fare increase," Villaberminas said in Cebuano.

Bases nationwide were allowed by the LTFRB to collect P6.50 as minimum fare for the first five kilometers and P1.20 for every succeeding kilometer.

But CEBOA, which has around 300 buses in the province, has been collecting only P5 per kilometers, based on their earlier agreement with Governor Gwendolyn Garcia.

Villaberminas said bus operators are also trailing from the aging cars of fuel but they could not ask for increase since many buses are even underchanging.

Villaberminas said some bus operators even collect only P4 to P5 in the case of some buses bound for Bogo town, which is 66 km. from Cebu city, due only collect between P40 to P50, instead of P66.

Villaberminas said small bus companies were the first to lessen the rates to attract passengers, prompting big bus companies like Ceres Liner to do the same.

Because of this, he said, other operators like him were also forced to lower their rates.

WAITING TIME
Residents of Pulupandan in Negros wait for their turn during the medical mission for Barangays at the Taboada Sports Complex. The medical mission, sponsored by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., has been going to different Negros municipalities since April 9 and will end on April 23.

N. Vizcaya gov't hit for using rice funds to build road, buy bulldozer

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—Officials and residents here have assailed the provincial government for allegedly sacrificing funds for a rice program in favor of road construction and a bulldozer.

Documents showed that a supposed P5-million allotment for the province's rice modernization program has been used to fund farm-to-market roads worth P800,000 and the purchase of a bulldozer for Kasibu town worth P1.5 million.

"This questionable move is highlighted now that the entire country is on the verge of a food crisis. At a time when we were supposed to improve rice production, roads and bulldozers are given priority," said Board Member Patricio Dunlao Jr.

Farmers here have expressed alarm over the looming decrease of their rice production due to the supposed abandonment by the provincial government of the "grains modernization" program, which has been left with a zero budget under the 2008 annual investment plan (AIP).

"This is even more worrisome because infrastructure projects and purchase of equipment have long been recorded as a good source of graft and corruption, especially in local governments where monitoring is often weak or even non-existent," said rice farmer Meja Balbin, 62.

The Dunlao letter to contact Gov. Luisa Cuaresma for comment on Wednesday but a member of her staff, Evelyn Bernal, said she was out of her office.

Provincial officials earlier defended the move, saying farm-to-market roads support the province's agriculture program.

Dunlao noted that provincial officials for sacrificing the program for hybrid rice production, which tops the province's list of priority projects, to accommodate infrastructure projects that are "unrelated" to the AIP.

"The program is a priority of the Department of Agriculture, that it has committed to provide subsidy which is twice the amount promised by the provincial government," he said.

GMA changes tune on rebs, says she wants peace by 2010

BANGUED, ABRA—PRESident Macapagal-Arroyo wants to make peace with all rebels in the country before she steps down in 2010.

This is a plan she revealed during a speech she gave before the Ilocos Local Peace and Security Assembly (LPSA) here on April 10.

But it is also the subject of a new peace plan that was presented to the assembly by the National Security Council on Wednesday.Among the issues raised at the assembly was the potential impact of a food crisis on the security of Cordillera provinces.

National Security adviser Norberto Gonzales told reporters here that "there is a need for grass storage," but those should not be triggered by the perceived food crisis affecting the country and other parts of the world.

The peace plan requires the "completion of comprehensive peace agreements with rebel groups resulting in permanent cessation of hostilities by 2010."

It cited the suspended talks with the National Democratic Front, which fell apart in August 2004, and which the government proposes to reestablish through alternative avenues such as regional peace talks or through the promotion of "kalayaan" areas.

Those are areas that would be behaved with government resources because they fall under the influence of insurgents.

Peace plan

The peace plan wants to fulfill "all final peace agreements signed since 1986," which began when then rebel group Comanda Bulweg agreed to a truce with former President Corazon Aquino.

The plan calls for the "seamless merging of rebel groups through an enhanced amnesty reintegration and reconciliation program."

Mr Arroyo said a social integration program has a P2,000-million allocation, which has yet to be spent.

Speaking in Ilocano, the President said she wanted to have peace by 2010, but it would require using "soft power" and "hard power" to convince rebels to lay down their arms.

The deployment of Army soldiers to build bridges and to work in schools is insurgency or can represent the "soft power," Mr Arroyo said, because it addresses the roots of the insurgency.

She said insurgency was only feeds on poverty, it may also be the reason for sustaining poverty in some regions.

"Everyone is welcome, but for those who do not submit to our overtures. [they have to be dealt with] using hard power," she said, which is a reference to an all-out war campaign against rebel groups. Mayor Catherine, Inquirer Northern Luzon

NEWSBRIEFS

LUPA CITY

Probe of shark slaughter ordered

BFT is the warning of shark scientist Dr. Simon Oliver last week that the country's eight-species fin threatens sharks if these were slaughtered for meat and fins, saying Batangas Gov. Mark Leviste said Friday he has ordered the provincial board to call for an investigation on the supposed deaths of sharks.

Leviste said the province would like to find out why the numbers of sharks are the reason which the shark meat and fins are sold, and why are they "openly sold" in public markets.

Last month, environmental group First Philippine Conservation Inc. reported that since Dec. 20, 2007, almost 40 thresher sharks had been killed in the coastal villages of Wawa, Pagbilao and Mabacong in Batangas City, Balaan town and Barangay Talaga in Nasugbu town.

Marlon Alexander Lalata, Inquirer Southern Luzon

BACOLOD CITY

Negros health insurance program

NEGROS Occidental officials on April 11 agreed to create a fund-raising to start a provincial health insurance program to help the poor.

Gov. Isidro Zayco said Representatives Alfredo Marañon III (2nd District), Jose Carlos Lacson (3rd District), Jeffrey Ferrer (4th City-Bird), and Genaro Mateo (5th District) have committed to support this health program, which will be run by professionals, funded with contributions from the provincial government, the congressional and the towns and cities of Negros Occidental, Zayco said.

The foundation will run and manage the insurance program that will cover the needs of Negrosanons, especially the poor, when they are hospitalized, Zayco said.

Clark P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas

LUCENA CITY

NPA rebels torch telecom cell site in Sorsogon

AT LEAST 20 suspected New People's Army rebels torched the cell site of Globe Telecommunications in Barangay Talisay-Talisay, Irosin, Sorsogon on Sunday.

Southern Luzon Command spokesperson Army Maj. Randolph Cabangbang said the control room of the cell site was burned down at 12:45 a.m. with the rebels taking extra time. 30-caliber revolver of security guard Reynaldo Galdon, one rebel said one mobile phone.

Dalin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

JOLO, Sulu

Sayyaf frees 7

ABU SAYYAF gunmen have released seven persons they abducted on separate occasions, including Joki Hosmenamar from Maria Rosalie Lee.

Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan said Lee, 50, who was abducted here in January, was freed early Friday morning.

"She was turned over to me by the Marines and police early dawn (Friday)," Tan said.

He said Hosmenamar the report provided by the Marines. Abu Sayyaf gunmen under sub-leader Jun Pacad released Lee in the hinterlands of Kanjaway village in Patikul town because of intense pressure from the Marines.

Ed General and Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

TACLOBAN CITY

Job fairs for new grads

A DOUBLE of job fairs are set to be conducted by the Department of Labor and Employment in Eastern Visayas to help ease unemployment in the region.

The highest unemployment rate now stands at 8.2 percent but this is expected to increase with more than 17,000 new graduates looking for jobs, DOLE regional director Ferlie Pagunsan said.

The job fairs will be held at the University of the Philippines-Tacloban campus on April 22, the DOLE-8 compound on April 23 and Eastern Visayas State University on April 24 and 25.

Joey S. Galvez, Inquirer Visayas

IMF chief warns . . .

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change mitigation, food security and social development.

The development group On Sun, a frequent IMF critic, said rich countries were largely responsible for the food crisis because they had been cutting aid to developing countries and encouraging biofuel production, which, the IMF said, was responsible for almost half the increase in the demand for food crops.

"Rich countries' demand for biofuel is driving up food prices and is a big part of the problem," said Elizabeth Stuart, an Oxfam policy adviser. "Meanwhile, by cutting aid levels, they are doing precious little to be part of the solution."

Strong impact on poor

Strauss-Kahn spoke at a news conference here after a daylong meeting of the economic committee of the 185-nation IMF that dealt with the unfolding global financial crisis that had affected economies around the world.

In his remarks, Strauss-Kahn noted "that a number of developing countries, especially low-income countries, have a sharp rise in food and energy prices, which have a particularly strong impact on the poorest segments of the population."

The committee urged the IMF to work closely with its sister institution, the World Bank, and other organizations to provide developing countries with financial support and policy advice to deal with these problems.

The Washington-based IMF said World Bank were established 64 years ago to respectively regulate the global economy and and provide aid to poor countries to reduce poverty.

Unusual uncertainties

The finance ministers and central bankers said their meeting took place "at a time of unusual uncertainties surrounding global and financial market prospects. It stresses that the challenges facing the world economy are global in nature, requiring strong action and close cooperation among the countries."

They said risks to economic outlook "come from the still unfolding financial market turmoil and from the potential worsening" of housing markets and the credit crisis.

"Downside risks...notably from higher food, energy and commodity prices—have also risen," the communiqué said.

The IMF said that in dealing with these risks governments must make sure inflation was kept under control, recognizing that each country's situation was different but coherent action was necessary.

Another topic on the committee's agenda was IMF reform. The ministers said changes such as giving developing countries with rapidly growing economies such as Brazil, India and China slightly more of a say in IMF operations "will strengthen the fund's role in promoting financial stability and international monetary cooperation."

Strauss-Kahn and Italy's Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, chair of the steering committee, welcomed the reforms to the institution's structure agreed to by the board at the meeting. Strauss-Kahn predicted that the reforms would be approved by enough countries to meet the necessary threshold of 85 percent of the votes later this month.

"I think there is really little chance that we won't reach the 85 percent," he said.

Most important decisions at the IMF, such as changing voting rights, and approving calls for more capital, require an 85-percent vote, giving the United States and the European Union effective veto power. The United States is the largest shareholder with more than 15 percent of the votes.

Multilateral institutions

Strauss-Kahn said that following the reforms, the IMF needed to refocus on its mission.

"We now need to stop looking inwards in the problem of organizing the fund itself and spend more time looking outwards to the problems of the world," he said.

The IMF called for a strong thrust to put the reeling world economy back on track.

"The global crisis has to be addressed with a global view and by strengthening the role of multilateral institutions," Dusha Gobinpa, chair of the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC), the IMF's top policymaking body, told reporters in a briefing.

The IMF said in its statement that "policymakers should continue to respond to the challenge of dealing with the financial crisis and supporting growth as while making sure that inflation is kept under control."

Unlike the last IMF meeting in October, when internal reforms were high on the agenda, this time the multilateral institution faced a full-blown, and still unfolding, financial crisis that began in August amid rising defaults on US high-risk subprime home loans.

IMF expertise needed

Tasked with maintaining global financial stability, the IMF, whose core finances are strained, looks to expertise and global range make it a key player in resolving what Strauss-Kahn earlier called the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The IMF last week warned the global economy was slowing so rapidly it could slide effectively into recession this year and next.

IMF policymakers also welcomed moves by central banks to provide liquidity support to ease strains in the credit markets. *Reports from AP and AFP*

Haiti gov't collapses

From page A1

President René Préval, who earlier recommend plans to cut the price of rice immediately, said he would seek a replacement for the ousted Jacques Edouard Alexis.

The prime minister took office in 2006 with Préval's backing to head a Cabinet aimed to assist the poor and fractious nation, whose intrigues were captured in Graham Greene's novel "The Comedians."

Opposition Sen. Youri Latortue said lawmakers ousted the prime minister because he did not boost food production and so Faneil is not a preamble for the departure of UN peacekeepers.

"I think that will satisfy the people," he said after 16 senators cast of 27 voted to remove Alexis.

Later, a UN police officer bringing food to his unit was pulled from a car and killed on a crowded style in Port-au-Prince.

Execution-style killing

The police officer, identified in a lawsuit report as Nigerian Cpl. Nagia Austin, 36, drove a marked UN vehicle into a crowded clothing market near the cathedral, where he was dragged from the car and shot through the neck, UN police spokesperson Fred Blaise said.

The incident is the first execution-style killing of a UN peacekeeper since the murder came to Haiti in 2004, Blaise said. Insurgents in the city, including two Haitian soldiers who work for the mission, were left unharmed.

UN sources said other Nigerian police officers fired tear gas and warning shots to disperse the crowd before recovering the chairman's body.

Two Haitian cops were detained for questioning, including a local television journalist who was covering the incident.

5 killed in riots

The clash between the prime minister and the senators came after the president of the country of 9 million people—most of whom earn less than $2 a day—managed to persuade citizens to end a week of violence in which at least five people were killed.

Some drowning crowds began hurling UN peacekeepers and Haitian police in the south on April 12, enraged at the soaring cost of rice, beans, cooking oil and other staples.

The unrest spread this week to the capital, Port-au-Prince, bringing the sprawling and chaotic city to a halt as looks took over the streets, smashing windows, looting shops, setting fire to cars and hurling rocks at motorists.

UN troops, stationed in Haiti since ended former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted in a revolt in 2004, fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse protesters.

Need for sacrifice

Disturbances over high food prices have broken out in several poor countries. Blaise said prices, rising demand for food in Asia, the use of farmland and crops for biofuels and other factors such as market speculation have pushed up food prices worldwide.

"The situation is difficult everywhere around the world, everyone has to make a sacrifice," Préval said as he announced the plan to cut rice prices.

Préval reiterated that Haiti could not afford to cut taxes on food because it needed the revenue to pay for longer-term projects that create jobs and boost agriculture.

It was unclear whether the price cut would satisfy protesters.

Taking no chances

The band of senators who ousted Haiti's latest government took no chances. They stayed together, ate together and even slept in the same place to keep defection or ambush from derailing their plan.

The 16 opposition senators had announced a day to advance they intended to fire Alexis.

But in Haiti's quicksand politics, replete with murky shifting alliances, anything can happen.

"So we decided to speed the right together," said Sen. Rudolph Boulgitte.

Voodoo practices

They called Alexis into a Saturday session of the Senate to defend his record in two years at the helm of a country perhaps best known for its impoverished masses and the widespread practice of voodoo.

The fate the Senate exerts had the necessary to demand the prime minister face a censure vote spoke volumes for Haiti's arrangea in the past two years to maintain democracy, after being run by ruthless military dictators and despites for most of the 200 years since a slave revolt freed the country from French rule.

Sensing all 16 votes to oust Alexis, the senators were on guard against accident, chance or any intrigue that might have unfolded.

"We didn't sleep at home. We all slept in the same place. We ate the same food to make sure no one got sick. We all went closer to parliament in a convoy," Boulgitte said.

Alexis was the first prime minister to be fired by a Haitian legislature only since the Duvalier family dictatorship ended in 1986, although two have resigned under pressure. *Reuters, AP*

HAITIANS walk in a street market in the neighborhood of Bel-Air in Port-au-Prince, a few blocks away from another destroyed market. A UN peacekeeper was shot to death in the capital on Saturday as rioters fueled by high food prices continued to simmer. AFP

NEW FACE ("VFD) The "dory" rice sold in this store at the Agdao public market in Davao City at P 18 a kilo is meant for farm animals and pets, but 23 centavos cheaper than the government-priced rice for poor people.

Church gives out rice ...

From page A1

urban poor families in the areas covered by the 86 Church outlets.

"The lines of urban poor families were very long in parishes such as the Our Lady of the Assumption parish in Malate, Manila, and the Sta. Clara de Montefalco in Pasay City," Pascual said in a phone interview with the Inquirer.

He said the NFA had agreed to supply Caritas with 2,000 sacks of rice every day based on a projection that each of the poor families consumes two kilos of rice daily.

"But this supply is not enough because our actual projection is that each family needs three kilos of rice every day," he said in an interview aired on the Church-run Radio Veritas.

Cesar Bernardo, Presidential Management Staff chief, said more people were lining up for NFA rice because many dealers who could afford the more pricey varieties were joining the queues. This was because NFA rice was being sold at around 50 percent lower than commercial rice and its quality was comparable to commercial varieties.

NFA rice is being sold at P18.37 per kilo, even while commercial rice is retailed at P34-P35.

"That's why there is a need for ranges," Bernardo said in a phone interview.

The NFA, which is scrambling to import at least 2.2 million metric tons of rice this year to cover a production shortfall, supplies only about 10 percent of the country's total rice consumption.

Distribution plan

At the Cabinet meeting tomorrow, President Macapagal-Arroyo and her officials will "fine-tune" the NFA's distribution plan so that cheap rice would reach the "poorest of the poor."

Despite the huge demand, the distribution of NFA rice in each of the Church outlets was generally orderly and peaceful, according to Pascual.

"Last year, we issued family cards to families with a daily income of P300 per day. These are the families that we will prioritize in the rice distribution program," he said.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap had said that the daily allowance of 2,500 extra tons would eventually be increased, according to the Cotabato executive director.

'Biyaan sa Parokya'

Pascual said Caritas simultaneously kicked off rice distribution operations in 28 churches in Manila, 11 in Quezon City, nine each in both Pasig and Taguig, eight each in Caloocan, Navotas and Malabon cities, three in Parañaque, 11 each in Marikina and Antipolo cities, and five in Bulacan.

The parishes were under the dioceses of Cubao, Novaliches, Malolos, Antipolo, Pasig, Paranaque and Caloocan.

The accredited outlets, dubbed "Biyaan sa Parokya," were opened to the public under the supervision and operations of Caritas Manila, the social arm of the Archdiocese of Manila.

Pascual said Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales had told Caritas to push through with the rice distribution program "since it is consistent with the role of the Church to help in attaining the common good of the people."

He said Rosales had tapped the churches and parishes to serve as rice distributors while the country faced a looming rice shortage.

Other basic goods, too

Aside from rice, basic goods, such as cooking oil, fish sauce, soy sauce, noodles and eggs, will soon be available at some "Biyaan sa Parokya" outlets, according to Pascual.

For the fourth straight week, the rice situation in the country will be the topic of the Cabinet meeting.

"The objective is to improve the efficiency of the rice distribution so that the intended beneficiaries, the poorest of the poor, will be reached," Bernardo said.

Tomorrow's meeting aims to identify anew the poorest of the poor and where they are to ensure efficient distribution of NFA rice, he said.

Bernardo said the Department of Social Welfare and Development had a list identifying the NFA rice beneficiaries.

The President will be updated by the NFA and the Department of Agriculture on her earlier instruction to the agencies regarding the distribution of NFA rice in the metropolis.

Upon her return early this month from Hong Kong, she instructed that 50% stocks be distributed in 400 outlets in Metro Manila, Bernardo said. Mr Arroyo also ordered that four distribution points be set up in each province.

Palace officials appealed to the "responsible, political opposition" to unite with the executive branch in coming up with solutions to the surging rice prices just days after Cabinet officials mocked the senators and the Speaker behind the Senate investigations that she claimed "will not put rice on the table."

Sen. Francis Pangilinan yesterday said he was open to "reaching out" to Mr Arroyo. But a number of his colleagues — Aquilino Pimentel Jr, Panfilo Lacson and Francis Escudero — were cool to hatching a deal with the Palace, saying they would only agree to such a reconciliation if she resigned or declared a ceasefire on corruption by her family and Cabinet officials.

Arroyo able to reaching out

In a text message, Pangilinan said: "Considering the urgency of the matter, as an independent, I am amenable to the Senate's reaching out to the Arroyo administration for the purpose of forging a common effort to address the food crisis.

"However, that effort must not in anyway be construed as the Senate backtracking from vigorously performing its constitutional role as a check and balance on the executive department."

He said such move should not be done at the expense of public accountability.

"As political leaders, we must learn to manage our political differences effectively so as not to disrupt the delivery of basic services. This is a challenge to all of us in the public sector," he said.

His colleagues greeted the Palace appeal with caution.

Political ceasefire

"What we need is a ceasefire on corruption to be unilaterally declared by Mr Arroyo, her family as well as her cronies. Its removal of appeal can only go to the opposition from criticizing and bringing to the attention of the Filipino people aspects of scams and anomalies as corruption and deliberate mal-feasance of Filipinos are guaranteed to stay poor and remain vulnerable to government club-outs and pressures," said Lacson in a text message.

He said he was willing "to work hand in hand with Malacañang on one simple condition—stop the shameless lying, stealing and cheating."

Escudero said that while the Senate was willing "to do what needs to to be done in the rice crisis," the political ceasefire should be accompanied by a similar moratorium on abuses, corruption and breaking the law.

Pimentel said a ceasefire was only possible with Ms Arroyo's resignation.

"Her questionable and corrupt policies are the prime reason why we have a problem with rice sufficiency. I don't see how we can jointly act talking about corruption that aggravated the rice problem," he said.

Asean emergency summit

Instead of a political ceasefire, Sen. Manuel Villar Jr suggested that the Presidency take the lead in calling for an emergency summit of the 10 members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) to come up with a common solution to the rice shortage plaguing the region.

Bonoan is set to file a resolution calling for the need to hold an Asean summit on food security, considering that the world's two biggest rice exporters (Thailand and Vietnam) and the world's biggest rice importer (the Philippines) belong to the group. With a report from Jeff Canoy in C. Cebu magpin Jr.

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First dog in space feted by Russians

Front page A1

He sure's official BBC channel showed ensemble grey-haired academics laying flowers in a monument near the city's Military Medicine Institute, depicting the agile, good-natured dog wrapped into a domed Soviet rocket.

Laika, whose remains was unveiled on the eve of Cosmonaut Day marking Soviet pilot Yuri Gagarin's April 12, 1961 space flight.

Gagarin's 108-minute mission in orbit was the first manned flight into space and dealt a severe blow in the prestige of the Soviet Union's cold War rival, the United States.

But long before Gagarin's flight, it was Laika who successfully blasted off into space on Nov. 3, 1957, proving that a living creature could survive being launched into space and experiencing weightlessness.

Laika, trained for eight months—including in a centrifuge and a pressure chamber—died during her historic flight.

Why not monkeys?

The US space program relied mainly on tests with primates in its early stages, a fact derided by Russian scientists.

"Monkeys are very ill-mannered—they try to cheat whenever they can, they fussy, they can switch whenever they want," BBC showed Vladimir Poznanskiy, head of a space and aviation academy, saying with a smile. "But the dog is a friend of humans and is easy to train."

Little was known about the impact of space flight on living things at the time Laika's mission was launched. Some believed they would be unable to survive the launch or the conditions of outer space, so Soviet space engineers viewed dogs' flights as a necessary precursor to human missions.

All dogs used in the Soviet space program were stray mongrel dogs...doctors believed they were able to adapt quicker to harsh conditions. All were small so they could fit into the dog capsules.

The 2-year-old Laika was chosen for the flight just nine days before the launch.

Good looks, certain death

Stories about how she was selected vary. Some said Laika was chosen for her good looks—a Soviet space pioneer had to be photogenic. Others indicated the top choice for the mission was dropped because doctors took pity on her. Since there was no way to design a re-entry vehicle in time for the launch, the flight meant certain death.

"Laika was quiet and charming," Dr. Vladimir Yazdovsky wrote in his book chronicling the story of Soviet space medicine. He revealed that before loading in the launch pad, he took the dog home to play with his children. "I wanted to do something nice for her. She had so little time left to live," Yazdovsky said.

The satellite that carried Laika into orbit took its last clear one month after the Soviet Union put the world's first artificial satellite into orbit on Oct. 4, 1957.

Due to less accurate technical problems, Laika had to wait for the launch to the cabin for three days. Temperatures were low and workers heated the cockpit through a hose.

When Laika reached orbit, doctors found with relief that her heartbeat, which had risen on launch, and her blood pressure were normal. She ate specially prepared food from a container.

Official vs real story

According to official Soviet reports, the dog was euthanized after a week.

After the Soviet collapse, however, participants in the project told the real story: Laika indeed was to be euthanized with a programmed injection, but she apparently died of overheating after only a few hours in orbit.

Several other dogs died in failed launches before the successful space flight—and safe return to Earth—of the dogs Belka and Strel. As in August 1960.

After a few other flights with dogs, the Soviets Union put the world's first human—Gagarin—in space. Reuters, AP

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FMEI

PHILIPS

Hanjin condo projects began without ECC

projects, saying they reflected foreign confidence in the economy.

Bello said that while it was rare that Hanjin passed all safety requirements and conditions for preserving the environment, it apparently also did some fast-tracking of the project on its own.

Project fast-tracked

"In the apartment project, Amidzhin nang-ano na ito ng [it appears that they started the] ground preparation before they applied for an ECC from the SBMA ecology center," Bello told this reporter. "This violation was duly communicated to Hanjin, with the threat of sanctions."

Bello added: "Hindi pa tapos ang evaluation namin, nag-start na sila [We hadn't completed our evaluation but they already began construction]. Several times the ecology center threatened to issue them a cease-and-desist order [dahil nag-umpisa na sila wala pa silang ECC (because they started construction even without an ECC)."

No violations committed

An ECC was eventually issued to Hanjin, according to Bello.

But Bello, speaking to this reporter who viewed the project site last week, also said he could assure environmental groups that so far as environmental laws were concerned, no violations were committed.

He said he and a team from the SBMA ecology center made several on-site inspections to ensure Hanjin's compliance with all environmental safety and mitigating measures.

The building of the two condominiums within the 10,000-hectare Forest Reserve and watershed area of the free port has provoked an outcry from environmentalists and prompted a blunt decision to launch an inquiry into whether any environmental laws were transgressed.

Major locator

Amerhyn-Jo Llana Koval, head of the SBMA ecology center, indicated the processing of the Hanjin application was expedited. "The reason is quite obvious. Hanjin is a major locator within SBMA with billions of dollars in investments," she said.

"The housing project of Hanjin is a priority project," Koval said, adding that "when a project is a top priority, it simply means that SBMA management expects all the departments concerned to act and attend expeditiously to their requirements."

Every step followed

Koval, however, clarified that it did not mean that Hanjin was spared from the step-by-step processing of its application.

"When a project is top priority, we would try get an order from management to expedite the processing of application," she said, stressing that while this was the order she got from her superiors, it was only because Hanjin "is the biggest investor in this free port zone."

Koval added in Filipino: "It was normal for us to expedite [same matatrel but it does not mean that we will engage in shortcuts. It only means multi-round [sets] of concerted actions."

Bello said the Hanjin housing project was one of several projects of the giant South Korean company that were expedited.

Express lane

"All Hanjin projects and requirements within the free port zone are considered priority because of their huge investments," Bello said.

As head of the Technical Environment Review Committee, Bello said there was an explicit request from Koval to expedite the evaluation and review of the project.

Bello said there was no pressure from Malacañang—directly or indirectly—on his technical review committee. "Small-time lang kami [We're just small-time]," he said.

According to him, when a project is expedited or submitted to the "express lane," the review committee meets as soon as the proponent is able to submit responses to concerns, unless clues hold a meeting upon the availability of the review committee members. *With inquirer Research*

DENR, SBMA to 'meet' on condo buildings

By Maane P Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

BORACAY ISLAND, AKLAN—THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources will meet with representatives of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) to find out how and why the conversion of two high-rise condominiums within Subic's sandboxer was allowed.

"We will meet them to get their side," Environment Secretary Lito Atienza said in a telephone interview on Saturday.

Asked if the DENR had found any irregularities in the conversion of the condos, Atienza said his office would wait for the SBMA to set its side. "It's a meeting, not an investigation," he said.

Atienza also said that at this point, there was "no legal basis" to stop the construction of the buildings. But the environmental group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan-PNE) said the project should be stopped because it was "ecologically destructive."

Importance of forest

In a statement, Kalikasan-PNE national coordinator Clemente Bautista pointed out that the forest cover was one of the few remaining forest reserve areas in the country. It is home to around 15 percent of the bird species in Luzon, 30,000 fruit bats and 27 endemic vertebrate species, the group said.

Bautista said any disturbance to the Subic forest ecosystem "will affect 130 hectares of mangrove areas located in the Central Luzon region."

"This is unfortunate as the Philippine forest is in a critical stage, with 2004 data showing that the country only has 14.18 percent forest cover left. This is way below the 34-percent forest cover standard for a tropical country to remain ecologically stable. With such a condition, each remaining forest cover must be protected," said Bautista.

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DID YOU KNOW

FORA, Avenue or Avenida Rizal, a popular commercial center in Manila, used to be known as Calle Colombo(que, meaning the edge of a town. It was named after Dr. Jose Rizal in 1901.
Cyril L. Bocobo III, Inquirer Research

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Libel raps recommended vs Lolit, editor

City prosecutor cites 'probable cause'

By Tina G. Santos

THE MANILA PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE HAS FOUND PROBABLE cause for the filing of libel charges against entertainment columnist Lolit Solis after she allegedly insinuated in an article that movie actors Piolo Pascual and Sam Milby were "gay mata."

In a resolution, Assistant City Prosecutor Bienvenido Agudo recommended the filing of charges against Solis and Veronica Samio, entertainment editor of Pilipino Star Ngayon.

"Finding probable cause, it is hereby recommended that respondents (Solis and Samio) be indicted for libel and the corresponding information be filed in court," Agudo said.

"We believe that all the elements of the offense were established, that there was sufficient evidence that libel was committed," added Assistant City Prosecutor Ike Arnulfo Salita. Once the case is filed in court, they can already post bail of P120,000 each. They can also file a petition for review with the Department of Justice," he added.

Sought for comment, Noel Bolaños, Solis' lawyer, said they have yet to receive an official copy of the resolution.

"We'd like to see it first, that we still have some remedies left. We could file a motion for reconsideration or a petition for review. It's still a long process," he told the Inquirer over the phone.

On the other hand, Joji Alonso, the lawyer of Pascual and Milby, said in a text message to the Inquirer, "We (just leave) Let the thing be this case. (So prosecutor's resolution) speak for itself."

"We'd rather not make any comment at this point. We thank everyone who has supported us and who continue to support our fight for what is right," Pascual and Milby said in a text message sent through Alonso.

The case stemmed from an item in Solis' "Take It, Take It" column last Oct. 10 in which she claimed she saw the two actors being "served" to each editor at the poolside coffee shop of the Sofitel Hotel at around 4 p.m. on Oct. 12.

"Her story was absolutely without any factual basis. We were not at Sofitel Hotel on Oct. 12, 2007. We never even went together to see her until date," Milby and Pascual said in their complaint filed in the Manila Prosecutor's Office.

Apart from being a complete lie, (the column) contained words and phrases sufficient to leave in the minds of the readers that we are gay men engaged in a romantic relationship, an imputation which undoubtedly damaged our reputation as bankable actors," they said.

They promptly filed a libel complaint when Solis refused to retract her statement, saying she was standing by her story.

The two actors sought P6 million each as moral damages due to the "mental anguish, fraught fear, reputation and social humiliation" caused by the article and P1 million each for exemplary damages.

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Former convict finds redemption in prison

By Prexy B. Hernández
Contributor

REAL LIFE STORIES OF FORMER convicts who have redeemed underline the importance of prison ministry and how it has changed their lives.

Charles Colson, a noted evangelist and author of "Loving God, Born Again," and other books about faith, was once known as the "hatchet man" and "evil genius" of US President Richard Nixon's administration when he served as a special counsel.

In 1974, he was indicted for obstructing to cover up the Watergate scandal. As he was facing arrest, a friend gave him a copy of the book "Mere Christianity" by C. S. Lewis. Colson claimed the book made him feel "the spirit of Christ for the first time" and took up Christianity.

After his release, Colson founded Prison Fellowship, the biggest prison ministry in the world today, and has since been spending his life spreading the Gospel and giving governments Bible-based recommendations on resolving justice and prison issues.

A former convict at the national penitentiary in Muntinlupa City who also has a dramatic conversion story is Rogie D. Candelario, 43, senior pastor of The One in Christ Harvest Community Church in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

PASTOR Rogie Candelario: From prison to the pulpit

Hooked on drugs

Candelario was a policeman who once got hooked on drugs. A dispute about drug money drove him to commit murder and he was sentenced to a 12-year prison term at the New Bilibid Prisons.

Many prisoners come from homes lacking an atmosphere of love and nurturing, he says in the book, "The Dynamical of Christianity in Rehabilitation Criminals," by D.E. Ruiz, founder of Christian Jail Ministry in the US and consultant of the John Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory.

Candelario agrees, saying that as a child, he was bitter and resentful.

"My father went to war always," he said. "He was arrested and detained in the Bulo Provincial Jail, but he escaped so I promised myself that I would be a policeman so I could retire him myself."

After finishing high school in Cebu, Candelario enrolled at the Philippine College of Criminology. Low on funds, he quit in his third year and found work as a fireman.

In 1992, he joined the Philippine National Police Special Action Force. His assignments took him to Metro Manila, Laguna and Cavite provinces. In Basilan province, he was involved in operations against the Abu Sayyaf.

Candelario was a decorated policeman. His commendations include the 1980's Medalya ng Kagalingan, Medalya ng Pagkilala at Medalya ng Pagbibigkod sa Mindanao, Medalya ng Parangal, Medalya ng Pagkilos sa Mamamayan at Medalya ng Pagsilong sa Nasalanta.

"My childhood ambitions of becoming a policeman indeed came true, but then God not make me happy," he said. Feeling empty, he turned to alcohol, drugs and women.

"It was ironic that as a law enforcer, I used and sold drugs when I should be enforcing the law against substance abuse," he said.

Drugs, Candelario said, came in easy supply from gunboss who used them to bribe policemen to evade arrest. He used drugs to fight off drowsiness on the job. And sad grief over the loss of his comrades in encounters and "the feeling of being abused by some commanders."

When his wife Judith left him with their three children, his addiction grew worse.

Guilt-stricken

After the murder incident, however, his conscience began to bother him. "I realized that the victim was a human being, not a just a stray cat. I also felt concern for his family that the thought of God and Jesus never crossed my mind," he said.

Behind bars, stripped of everything that had been his concerns before—"drugs, money, gun, authority, power—and family," he felt "like a filthy rag." In a moment of interesting dependency, he remembered God. "I called the name of Jesus and begged Him to forgive and rescue me," Candelario said.

Although his cravings for alcohol and drugs remained for a while, he began attending worship services where he heard about the Gospel from pastors and missionaries.

Biblical messages moved him so much he read the Bible from cover to cover 21 times.

Candelario then volunteered as a helper to a prison church, Bethlight Ministries, became its deacon and elder and later was enrolled as the Armed Forces of the Philippines' prison seminary where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in theology.

He began ministering especially to death convicts. On his fourth year in prison, he was ordained associate pastor of Bethlight Ministries.

By what he called God's grace, Candelario's prison term was commuted to seven years. Freed in 2004, he reunited with his family and became a pastor of One in Christ Community Church.

Last year, he earned a master's degree in Christian Leadership from the International School of Theology-Asia.

At the same time, he was able to minister to his father before the latter died.

"My father was a fugitive from justice until the end," he said, "but I believe that he became a free man when he asked God for forgiveness before he breathed his last."

At present, Candelario is involved in the Face to Face Ministry of Action Philippines—a prison ministry—serv-

TURN TO A17

CANDELARIO prays with members of his congregation at The One in Christ Harvest Community Church in Sta Cruz, Manila.

Prison ministry plays pivotal role in rehab of criminals

STUDIES SHOW THAT MANY CRIMES are committed by recidivists or "career criminals"—individuals who have been arrested or convicted a number of times and who commit more crimes when released from prison.

Crimes are increasing at alarming rates. Projections from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology reveal that the total jail population could reach 89,000 this year; 103,350 in 2009 and 114,300 in 2010.

In Metro Manila alone, the number of inmates has reportedly grown 400 percent more than the combined capacity of jails supervised by the BJMP.

This is one reason the BJMP sets aside millions of pesos for the rehabilitation of prisoners and detainees.

Secular rehabilitation refers to the process used by the criminal justice system to prevent an offender from committing future crimes.

The most common rehabilitation programs include probation, parole supervision, improved classification programs, community or livelihood projects, education and training programs, counseling, and recreational and social skills training.

The Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center has every come up with a novel therapy in the form of percussion dance exercises in the tune of Michael Jackson's "Thriller" and "I Will Follow Him" from the movie, "Sister Act." The dance therapy has been popularized worldwide through YouTube.

Studies show, however, that although rehabilitation programs with supervision and sanctions could in some positive effect, no reference is safe from recidivism.

This was confirmed by Mark W. Lipsey of the Institute for Public Policy Studies at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, and Francis T. Cullen of the Division of Criminal Justice, University of Cincinnati, Ohio, in their book, "The Effectiveness of Correctional Rehabilitation: A Review of Systematic Conference."

Rehabilitation is believed to be a byproduct of the Christian ministry to prisoners.

The establishment of penitentiaries was said to be an idea of Quaker religious leaders in the 18th century to give convicts an opportunity to do "penance," wrote Dale R. Dice in "A Criminal's Guide to Effective Jail & Prison Ministries."

Parents, priests, ministers and Christian workers agree that many criminals have been converted and transformed because they begin to see hope through Jesus Christ.

They cite three things that moderate criminals to change: One, the assurance of

FROM PAGE A15

Manila cops vow quick response

By Tina G. Santos

EXPECT MANILA POLICEMEN TO respond to an emergency situation within seven minutes or less.

That was the commitment given by officials and members of the Manila Police District now that their patrol cars are equipped with a global positioning system or GPS device that would allow them to determine which patrol team is nearest to the scene of a crime.

The GPS device uses satellite navigation to pinpoint the exact location of a vehicle. The location is then sent via text messaging to the MPD's equally high-tech Director Tactical Operations Center and the police car's location is then viewed on a digitalized map in the DTOC's war room.

The GPS project, which was formally launched yesterday at the MPD headquarters, is just the start of the modernization of the police force, according to MPD director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosario.

Some 100 police mobile cars are already equipped with the GPS device, he said, adding that all roving police personnel have been issued new handheld radios for quick and easy communication.

The system would also be used to ensure that Manila policemen are always within their respective areas of jurisdiction.

"We can easily locate erring policemen, especially those who usually go somewhere else and abandon their posts. This will discipline our policemen to ensure that they're doing their jobs while deployed on the streets," a police official said.

MetroBriefs

Manila steps up antirabies campaign

THE CITY government of Manila has intensified its campaign against rabies to ensure that residents are protected against the deadly disease. "Your cooperation can greatly help the city government in its antirabies campaign and in the promotion of responsible pet ownership in Manila," said Mayor Alfredo Lim. He tasked City Administrator Jesus Mari Marcaida to make sure that all barangays, as well as the city's public and private schools, are informed of the dangers posed by the disease spread by the bite of an infected animal. The Manila Veterinary Inspection Board, under Marcaida, has allotted P536,000 for the campaign that offers free antirabies shots for dogs, cats and other privately-owned pets. Marcaida said the BIB was able to vaccinate a total of 18,000 dogs, this cats and four monkeys. The free vaccinations is being undertaken upon the request of barangay officials and individuals who coordinate with either the barangays, VM or any of the six satellite offices of the city.

Raul E. Santos

3 hurt in mishap

THREE people were injured, one of them seriously, when a passenger jeepney driven by an elderly pedestrian in Manila City at dawn yesterday. SPO1 Rainer Esteves of the Manila City traffic department said 56-year-old student Erlinda Enriquez was driving a motorcycle with his companion, Rita Peñada, 18, when he hit Amando de Leon, 66, who was crossing J.P. Rizal Ave. Esteves said De Leon lost control of the motorcycle and slammed into an electric post. The police said Enriquez sustained serious injuries in the head. De Leon and Peñada also suffered injuries and contusions, but these were not as serious as Enriquez's. The police said Esteves said Enriquez and Peñada were not wearing helmets at the time of the accident. All three victims were rushed to the Ospital Rodriguez Medical Center and the police are mulling criminal charges against them.

Artherl L. Alave

Ban on fake goods eyed

THE SAN JUAN City Council is deliberating on a proposed ordinance that will bar the sale and manufacture of fake and pirated goods. Should it be approved, the ordinance will complement national antipiracy and intellectual property laws. Councilor Cluster Gamboa, who introduced the bill penalizing the sale, rental, transfer, contribution, manufacture and/or production of pirated and counterfeit goods, said the proposed law aims to protect intellectual property rights by curbing the sale of fake items. Under the bill, which has been passed on its first reading, offenders will be fined P2,500 plus face imprisonment of six months.

Artherl L. Alave

PACO'S NO PARKING ZONE NOW JEEP TERMINAL

Ruth Herrera, 38, of Malate, Manila, writes: "Agnes de Sousa between Pedro Gil and Mateo Sousa in Paco, Manila, is now a jeepney terminal. The east side of the street is supposed to be a no parking zone. Mayor Lim, HELP!"

Citizen's call

Dangerous crossing

THE EDSA/NLEX-bound route between the Manila Pool Office and the National Printing Office building on Bonifacio Drive in Manila which was closed before is now open. Apart from causing traffic, the reopening of the area can also lead to accidents because people cross the street anytime, which is a violation of a traffic regulation that does not allow anyone to cross between and after pedestrian bridges.

ANTHONY ALCUSE, 38, Binondo, Manila

Double-parking on C3 Road

ANG MGA sasakyang nagpapark sa kahabaan ng C3 Road malapit sa Rizal Avenue Extension sa Kalookan City ay nagdudulot ng abala sa mga motorista. Ang mga sasakyan ay nagpapark sa magkabilang panig ng kalsada, kaya't nagkakaroon ng dalawang linya ang kalsada. Ito ay dahil sa kawalan ng maayos na parking area. Ang mga sasakyan ay nagpapark sa harap ng mga tindahan, sa tapat ng mga bahay, at sa mismong kalsada. Dahil dito, nagkakaroon ng traffic sa lugar, lalo na sa oras ng rush hour. Ang mga motorista ay nagrereklamo dahil sa kawalan ng maayos na parking area. Ang mga sasakyan ay nagpapark sa magkabilang panig ng kalsada, kaya't nagkakaroon ng dalawang linya ang kalsada. Ito ay dahil sa kawalan ng maayos na parking area. Ang mga sasakyan ay nagpapark sa harap ng mga tindahan, sa tapat ng mga bahay, at sa mismong kalsada. Dahil dito, nagkakaroon ng traffic sa lugar, lalo na sa oras ng rush hour. Ang mga motorista ay nagrereklamo dahil sa kawalan ng maayos na parking area.

Salamat po sa tulong.

(There is a thriving business area on the stretch of C3 Road near Rizal Avenue Extension in Manila. The place is now available for parking but for motorists who either rent or buy secondhand automotive parts. Even goyad trucks are parked there. Could be a risky environment for motorists. Thanks for your help.)

ANGELICA LIM, 34, Caloocan City

Barrier to traffic flow

ALEGRE, kamakailan ng nagpapatupad ng Anti-Jaywalking Week sa C. Cruz ang mga tauhan ng pamunuan ng barangay ng Sto. Cristo. Ang mga ito ay nagtatalaga sa kahabaan ng Sto. Cristo at Gen. Luna

MMDA won't take down BF posters

By DJ Yap

HOSTILE INSCRIPTIONS ON THE CONtroversial posters of Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando in the streets, the agency said it had no plans of removing them.

MMDA General Manager Robert Nazareno shrugged off criticisms that the turquoise posters smacked of early campaigning by Fernando, who has expressed his desire to run for president in 2010.

"The posters inform the public about our programs and appeal to the public to follow the law. Nowhere can you find any political message in them," he said.

Nazareno also pointed out that the posters look far from a campaigning tool considering that it shows a photo of a "silent-looking" Fernando instead of a smiling, photogenic image.

"His (Fernando's) picture is not meant to attract people. It's meant to instill fear," the official said.

He also dismissed reported plans by the Makati City government to file charges against the MMDA for possible violation of local ordinances.

Last week, the city tore down at least 20 of Fernando's giant posters posted on center islands and Metro Rail Transit pools on the Makati-Ayala Avenue.

Makati Department of Environmental Services chief Emilio Villaluz said MMDA officials could be held liable for violating the Makati Solid Waste Management Code which prohibits the defacement of walls and public spaces.

He added that the MMDA may also have violated Ordinance 93-330 which considers illegal road signs as obstructions.

Nazareno, meanwhile, said the agency's lawyers would study the ordinances cited by Villaluz and would act accordingly.

Prison ministry . . .

From page one

salvation and peace of mind through repentance and acceptance of the lordship of Jesus. Two guidance from the Bible or Team spiritual books, as well as from counselors or from fellowship in churches and Christian communities, and three, effective discipleship that empowers a convict to live a changed life.

A key Bible verse that opens the door to genuine change, according to counselors, is John 3:16 which says: "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." Pmsp S. Montesclaros

QC police start demolition of houses in disputed area

By Beverly T. Mantoldad

THE QUEZON CITY POLICE DISTRICT has started demolishing the houses of some 200 families said to be illegally occupying a disputed portion of Camp Karingal in Tandang Sora, Quezon City, to give way to the construction of quarters for its men.

The demolition began last Friday and was expected to continue today if residents fail to quit a court order.

But a member of the Camp Karingal Bonanza Neighborhood Association Inc., who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal, questioned the legality of the demolition, saying the QCPD has not showed them proof that it has a right to evict them from their houses.

The QCPD, the member said, claimed that its men were there merely to assist the families who had volunteered to leave their homes. Instead, the member added, the police were on to tear down their houses.

QCPD chief, Senior Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula, said in a phone interview that the residents were earlier asked to voluntarily leave the area before Friday.

"Friday was their deadline. There are absentee roads by the families of policemen which are like extensions of their offices. That is illegal," he added.

Residents in the area have already asked a Quezon City court to stop the demolition by issuing a temporary restraining order. The court, however, has not yet ruled on the petition.

The lawyer of the neighborhood association is expected to follow up the petition today.

The QCPD has sought to evict more than 200 families living inside Camp Karingal to give way to a "quartering project" for its men.

Residents, however, said the city police does not have the right to make them leave because their homes are not within the 3-ha property which the University of the Philippines leased to the Philippine Nationalbank in 1974.

Former convict finds redemption . . .

From page one

ing the Manila City Jail, the Correctional Institution for Women, New Bilibid Prisons and the Iwahig Penal Colony in Mindoro.

He has a message for recalcitrant policemen: "Jesus said in John 8: 35: 'What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?'"

And for former convicts who think that they would bear the ugly marks of prison all their lives, this is what Candelario has to say: "God promises in 2nd Corinthians 5: 'Those who accept Christ become new persons. The old life is gone, a new life has begun!'"

Clinton fights to keep White House quest alive

CLINTON

WASHINGTON—HILLARY CLINTON on Sunday fell further from her White House hopes after going into a tense 10-day stretch which could define the end game of her underdog Democratic rivalry with Barack Obama.

Anything less than a big win in the Pennsylvania primary on April 22 would severely dampen her hopes of taking the race to the end of the nominating calendar in June, in her longest odds bid for the White House.

But remarks by Obama—labeling working class voters as "bitter"—could give Clinton the wedge she needs to pick up ground in the race, and she took off with the issue Monday by suggesting her rival was condescending toward a large segment of US voters.

"Senator Obama's remarks are elitist and are out of touch. They are not reflective of the values and beliefs of Americans. Certainly not the Americans that I know," she said at an Indiana rally.

After six weeks of long distance sparring, Clinton and Obama will clash in a face-to-face debate in Philadelphia on Wednesday night.

Clinton, 60, with Obama, 46, in total nominating victories, the popular vote and elected delegates racing into the Pennsylvania contest, and badly needs a convincing win to quell questions about why she is still in the race.

"Perception right now is crystal to her being able to continue," said Allen Dollan, an election analyst and known professor at Princeton University.

"The perception that she has the right to continue, the perception that she has the possibility of winning," Dollan said.

Clinton's massive battle cry also target the still-undecided "superdelegates"—top party officials core enough to deciding the nomination.

Pennsylvania should be crucially the kind of state where Clinton can triumph, with its traditional blue-collar Democrats, receptive to her populist economic message as a base against of a narrow successful victories.

But those advantages are top flaws expectations for Clinton, and failure to meet them with a convincing win—of 10 points or more—may be one more in a defeat than a victory.

Clinton has led in Pennsylvania for months, but a Quinnipiac University poll last week had Obama surging to within six percentage points.

"With five weeks to go, Senator Obama is heading up the slope of a major political upset" in Pennsylvania, said Clay Richards of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute. Professor Tom Baldino, of Wilkes University, Pennsylvania, predicted Clinton would win the state, but said the margin of victory was critical.

"The question is, will it be by 10 or more?" he said.

The Clinton campaign's ability to score on Obama's remarks on white, working class voters as a fundraiser in California last week could.

AFP

Iraq secretly negotiated for arms with Serbia

BAGHDAD—SECRETS MILLION Iraqi arms deal secretly negotiated with Serbia has underscored Iraq's continuing problems equipping its armed forces, a process that for long has been plagued by corruption and inefficiency.

The deal was struck in September without competitive bidding and it sidestepped anti-corruption safeguards, including the approval of senior uniformed Iraqi Army officers and an Iraq ministry approval committee, Defense said. It was negotiated by a delegation of 22 high-ranking Iraqi officials, without the knowledge of American commanders or many senior Iraqi leaders.

The deal does enough evidence that Iraqi officials continued the purchases to $236 million. And much of the equipment, American commanders said, turned out to be either shoddy or inappropriate for the military's mission.

The secretive of the purchases highlights how the Iraqi Army's administrative abilities—already hampered by sectarian rifts and corruption—are woefully underdeveloped. Studying it to percentage weapons and other materials in a systematic way by other Army how an American procurement process set up to help foreign countries navigate the complexity of buying weapons can fail first and carelessly for wartime needs like Iraq's, prompting the Iraqis to strike out on their own. AFP

AT LOGGERHEADS
A bull called "Jaspin" (right) pushes head to head with "Chokang" during the 2008 Bullfighting Festival in Gwangju, southwest of Seoul, South Korea, on April 13. More than 150 bulls from all of the nation took part in a week-long bullfighting event.

Iran mosque blast kills 11, wounds 200

TEHRAN—ELEVEN PEOPLE were killed and at least 20 wounded when an explosion ripped through a mosque in Iran's southern city of Shiraz during evening prayers by a presidential ally, officials said on Sunday.

Mystery surrounded the cause of yesterday's blast, which some officials insisted had been triggered by an accident but others said could have been caused by a bomb.

The massive explosion in the early hours of the morning—with pilot at around 9 p.m. during an evening prayer session by prominent local cleric Mohammad Amin—killed, Iranian media reported.

Shiraz people were killed and 150 wounded, local emergency services official Mohsen Imad Javad Mousavilan told the official IRNA news agency.

"The incident could have happened as a result of negligence. A while ago at this site there was an exhibition commemorating the (1980-1988) Iran-Iraq war," Iran's police chief Esmail Ahmadi Moghadam told the Fars news agency.

"The munitions left at the site could have caused this explosion," he added. The agency said he ruled out an act of sabotage.

Television pictures showed shards of glass and piles of debris at the site of the blast while huge crowds gathered to await news of survivors.

"Last night's incident... was definitely an accident. We are studying the cause but as of now the main reason is not clear," Deputy Interior Ministry Abbas Mohtaj told the Shiraz news agency.

AFP

'Milkshake murderer' appeals to be heard in Hong Kong

ADSEL

HONG KONG—"MILKSHAKE murderer" Nancy Kissel, serving a life sentence for bludgeoning her high-flying banker husband to death after facing his drink with sedatives, will appeal the verdict in Hong Kong Monday.

The appeal will be heard in the city's high court in front of a panel of three judges and is expected to last eight days, according to court documents.

The case is set to strangle-into interest in the American couple's bizarre relationship, which included adultery, violence, private detectives, poisoning and above all, enormous wealth.

Kissel's trial for the murder of her husband Robert Kissel in November 2003 was the first of the city's sensitive expatriate community in Hong Kong, gripping local and international media, and fascinating the subject of a real-life crime book.

The murder appeal will be based on the trial judge's ruling on evidence, concerning an audiotape made by her friend Sue and Ann, the South China Morning Post reported yesterday.

The original marathon three-month trial was one of the longest in the former British colony's legal history.

Kissel was found guilty of killing her husband after serving him a murderous milkshake laced with a cocktail of sedatives, before bashing the 36-year-old Lehman investment banker to death with a lead ornament.

She disposed of his body by rolling him up in an old carpet, before concealing it in storage space at the luxury apartment, in one of the southern Chinese city's most exclusive hilltop addresses.

She had continued to sleep in the same room as the body for several nights, according to court testimony.

Removed men who were called in to dispose of the carpets were overwhelmed by the stench of the rotting corpse. Forensic tests found the deceased's stomach and liver contained four times of sedatives.

Prosecutors in the 2005 trial claimed the quiet mother who played a leading role in Hong Kong's expatriate community had stood to gain up to $10 million in insurance payouts from the investment banker's death.

Nancy by a passionate fling with an electrician in her native United States. Kissel had meanwhile developed a taste of conflict with in her marriage that she saved as an excuse for killing her husband, said then-prosecuting barrister Peter Chapman.

Kissel's defense team painted her as a loving but long-suffering wife who had been subjected to regular violent attacks by a husband who abused cocaine and alcohol.

She was frequently forced to endure bouts of violence and sex attacks had left her injured and in pain, they said.

But Kissel finally conceded she had killed her husband after he attacked her with a baseball bat after selling her he wanted to divorce her and take away their three young children.

The case inspired a book by Singaporean author Joe Hayes Jones, which Nancy Kissel described as a "gross misrepresentation" of herself and threw around her, according to a separate Post report last year.

The book painted the murderess as an insidious adulteress who was addicted to shopping in Hong Kong's luxurious malls.

AFP

Australia's straight-talking 'nerd' PM wins plaudits on world tour

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIAN PRIME Minister Kevin Rudd has ended his first world tour leading in pains from political analysts for managing to strike China over Tibet without endangering lucrative trade ties.

Rudd returned to Canberra Sunday after an 11-day trip taking in China, the United States and Europe which has been described as a "global victory lap" following the centre-left leader's landslide election win last November.

It was a chance for Rudd, who was widely regarded as a socially foreign policy buff before he became Labor Party leader in late 2006, to display the skills he honed as a diplomat in Beijing and Stockholm early in his career.

He forged a warm relationship with US President George W. Bush on the trip despite their ideological differences and opposing views on Iraq, with the US leader describing him as a "straight forward fellow."

Rudd also set aside his republican beliefs to take tea with Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace.

But by far the most issue confronting Rudd, an avowed Sinophile, was how to deal with China's crackdown on protests in Tibet when he visited Beijing on the last leg of his trip.

He acquitted many by truly living the trust head on in a speech delivered in Tsinghua Mandarin at Beijing University last Wednesday, telling his audience: "Where new nations become aggressive nations in Tibet."

"The current situation in Tibet is of concern to us worldwide. We recognise the need for all parties to avoid violence and find a solution through dialogue," he said.

He then followed up by urging Premier Wen Jiabao to open discussions with the Dalai Lama at a meeting in the same day, a request vehemently opposed by the Chinese, who see the Tibetan spiritual leader as a troublesome separatist.

Allan Gyngell, executive director of Sydney-based foreign policy think-tank the Lowy Institute, said it was seen as a risky move by Rudd to "show new Chinese interest Japan as Australia's largest trading partner but not."

Gyngell, however, said it was a calculated strategy from Rudd, whose intimate knowledge of China allowed him to gauge how far he could push the Tibet issue before he damaged ties irreparably offending local sensibilities.

"It went as well as could be expected," Gyngell said. "He gave a forthright assessment of the Myer's view on Tibet to the next generation of Chinese leaders at Beijing University.

He also sent a message to China that its relationship with Australia is not all about trade, that there will be areas on which the two countries will have to agree to disagree.

"I discussed the relationship in many ways and showed that it is multi-faceted."

Australian National University professor of Chinese history Geremie Barme agreed, noting Rudd had "measured tone" the message that a true friend pointed out faults, rather than serving silent when something was wrong.

"In doing so, he restores the rules of engagement in a way that can only benefit Australia and our relationship with this important country," Barme said.

AFP

RUDD

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

PLDT would like to announce that effective April 28, 2008 the long distance rates applicable to its payphone service shall be as follows:

Toll Service	Per Minute Rate*
NDD (to any landline)	P5.00
IDD	P10.00 (to 85 international destinations) P12.00 (Bahrain, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Turkey, Yemen, Saudi Arabia-landline) P17.00 (Iraq, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Syria, UAE, Saudi Arabia-cellphone)

*Rates are applicable any day, anytime and inclusive of 12% E-VAT for NDD and 10% Overseas Communications Tax for IDD

Nato's dangerous signals

By Ulrike Ellermann-Jurczyk

COPENHAGEN—TWO EXPLOSIVE signals were sent from Nato's Bucharest summit. The first was that Russia has established a "sphere of influence" in Europe, where countries are no longer allowed to pursue their own goals without Moscow accepting them. The other was that the Nato member states are free to blackmail their partners into supporting their own narrow goals.

The first signal was sent when Ukraine and Georgia were denied the Membership Action Plan (MAP) they had sought. Instead, the spineless heavyweights led by Germany and France, said no, despite strong support for the idea from the United States.

The second signal was sent when Greece successfully forced membership for Macedonia, a move that reflected the two countries' unresolved conflict over Macedonia's name (which Greece insists must be Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia—FYROM—because of the now disgraceful seventies' harassing international politics today).

The dispute with Macedonia goes back to the early 1990's, when Yugoslavia collapsed into its independent states. Greece vehemently opposed its neighbour's use of the name Macedonia and symbols from the days of Alexander the Great in its flag and coins. Macedonia at one point agreed to design a new flag and remove the symbols, as well as to amend its constitution to clarify that it had no territorial claims on Greece, but it flatly refused to live under one of the most ridiculous names suggested by its biggest neighbour.

In these you are a Greek or, to us Macedonia's national aspirations could in fact threaten a name that does not make the Greeks either in favor of aggression from the north. It sounds ridiculous, but there is another, often overlooked, aspect to the dispute: by refusing to let Greece is demonstrating a lack of confidence in its Nato partners. Why Macedonia is there, any military-status policy that undermined regional stability would certainly be stopped in its tracks. If the Greeks cannot see that, their partners must let them know that there is a price for their obstructive behavior.

The problem with Ukraine and Georgia is far more serious. In a sense, Russia has behaved like Greece in claiming that Nato enlargement threatens its security. That is nonsense, and Putin knows it. But the Russian has found that bringing like a spoiled child gets results: the right to influence developments over former countries.

Terror to weigh heavily during Pope's US trip

THE POPE during the Easter Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on March 23. ▸

NEW YORK—THE TRIP TO THE United States by Pope Benedict XVI will be spiritual rather than political, but the issue of terrorism and controversial methods used by the US government in the fight against it are expected to figure prominently during the journey.

The Pope, whose six-day visit to the United States will begin in Washington on Tuesday, will pray for "the wisdom and courage to work tirelessly for a world where true peace and love reign among nations and in the hearts of all."

Benedict is to meet President George W. Bush at the White House and address the UN General Assembly during the trip.

While in New York, he will also address the pedophile scandals that have rocked the US Catholic Church in recent years.

The Pope, who will turn 81 on Wednesday, will hold an open-air Mass in each of the two cities.

In New York, where the Pontiff will stay from next Friday through Sunday, he will make a pilgrimage to Ground Zero, the former site of the twin towers of the World Trade Center destroyed during the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

"The Pope's visit is very important for families like myself who had never had any recovery of my loved one," Sally Regenhard, who lost a son during the attacks, said.

"Ground Zero is a 'sacred' place for over 1,300 who have never ever been recovered. Their remains are still in and around Ground Zero."

Like his predecessors, the late Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI has repeatedly condemned wars and other forms of violence.

"As early as during his first apostolic trip to August 2005 to Germany, Benedict XVI called on Muslims of the entire world to join Christians in the fight against terrorism, which he described as a planetary phenomenon," said journalist and writer Bernard Lecomte, who is the author of a biography of Benedict XVI.

"This is how he deepened a rapprochement of Catholics with other religions, notably Islam," he added. He recognized that this is the only way to fight violence.

Acting from this perspective, the Pontiff has accepted an invitation by Rabbi Arthur Schneier to visit a New York synagogue on the eve of Passover.

"I have spent 40 years of my life promoting dialogue and human rights," Schneier said.

"I founded in 1965 the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, which proclaims that 'a crime committed in the name of religion is the greatest crime against religion.'"

The rabbi continued: "I bet my family in the Bronx 5 do not want to see this tragedy happen again in any group—Catholics, Jewish or Muslims."

"What changed since Sept. 11, 2001, is the era," adds Lecomte. "The problem for the Catholic leader is that terrorism is very often associated with Islamic extremism.

"One tends to forget the terrorist acts perpetrated in the past decades by the Basque separatist opposition FTA, the IRA in Northern Ireland, or by the Colombian FARC rebels."

While Benedict XVI confirmed his criticism, he does not approve all the methods employed by Washington to combat it.

Like John Paul II, he is opposed to the war in Iraq. He emphasizes human dignity and condemns torture as human rights organizations blame certain interrogation methods employed by the CIA, notably its "waterboarding" technique.

"The Catholic Church condemns use of torture as a means of getting the truth," said in 2005 Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. "Torture is a humiliation of a human being, and, therefore, the Church does not accept it." AFP

In US, cheap meals are in, that means pizza is out

IT'S A TOUGH TIME TO BE IN THE restaurant business unless, of course, the food on your menu is really cheap.

Sun might think that pizza would fall into that category, but, as it turns out, America's largest pizza chains are being hammered by sluggish sales and runaway ingredient costs. It's a bad time to be in a business where one of the main ingredients are cheese and dough. Dairy and wheat prices have skyrocketed in the last year.

At Domino's Pizza, sales at domestic stores are down, and David A. Brandon, the chair and chief executive, recently bemoaned "the combination of unprecedented cost inflation and cautious consumer spending."

Not Brandt, the owner of Papa Murphy's, has had its problems, too. Though the company, which also owns Taco Bell and Kentucky Fried Chicken, doesn't break out sales for its different chains, a company spokesperson said it was experiencing the same challenges as its competitors.

Same-store or comparable-store sales, those for stores open at least a year, for all of Yum's brands were flat last year.

Papa John's International has also struggled in a "difficult cost and competitive environment," said Nigel Travis, the president and chief executive.

The average price of a slice of pizza in New York City is now about $3, up from $2 to $2.25 a year ago.

Most restaurants have been hit hard by rising ingredient costs, as have consumers at the grocery store. But pizza chains have more room than high ingredient costs. They haven't figured out a way to compete with the value menus at McDonald's and Burger King, which are thriving as consumer pocketbooks become squeezed.

Even though the pizza chains are constantly offering specials, it's pretty hard to order a meal for less than $5 and usually it's still over $10 if you include drinks and extra toppings. By contrast, a double cheeseburger, fries and a Coke can be bought for $3 plus tax at McDonald's. AFP

'Fierce one' gets taste of victory in Nepal

KATHMANDU—AFTER 23 YEARS UNderground and a decade of armed struggle across Nepal's jungles and hills, Maoist leader Prachanda has finally savoured victory at the ballot box.

His Maoist party was emerging at the weekend as the surprise single biggest victors in early results of landmark elections to rubberstamp the 10-million nation after a bloody civil war.

Prachanda, who signed up to peace and embraced democracy in 2006, has had trouble shaking off his image of being a ruthless warlord.

But on Saturday the former guerrilla, whose nom de guerre means the "fierce one," reaffirmed his commitment to democracy.

"I thank all Nepalese people for giving me the responsibility to make a new Nepal. I will remain fully committed to the peace process and multi-party democracy," said Prachanda, who scored a landslide win in his Kathmandu constituency.

Prachanda, a former teacher, has said he wants to be the first president of a republican Nepal. "If the masses want to give me the responsibility."

The elections marked the climax of a peace pact that ended the bloodshed, unprecedented nation's 10-year civil war.

The polls were held for an assembly that will rewrite Nepal's constitution. The Maoists had hoped to score well so they could push forward on abolishing the monarchy and demolishing what they see as the country's "feudal" system.

The party's strong showing—by late Saturday it had won or was leading in a total of 82 seats—for the 601-seat assembly was a surprise to analysts who had expected the Maoists to fare poorly.

"What we can be fairly certain about is that the Maoists have a strong chance of emerging as the single largest party," said Nepali Times political columnist and analyst Prashant Jha.

The Maoists' transition from feared guerrillas to a mainstream party has not been smooth, and they came in for widespread criticism for their conduct in the poll build-up, accused of using threats and violence to intimidate voters.

The United States continues to list the group as an international terrorist organization responsible for deadly attacks and assassinations during the revolt, that claimed at least 13,000 lives and ended with a November 2006 peace deal. AFP

PRACHANDA

The WORLD

Edited by Lorenzo B. Bueza

China-Taiwan meet breaks 60 years of ice

TAIPEI—A LANDMARK MEETING ON SATURDAY BETWEEN China's president and Taiwan's vice president-elect broke 60 years of ice and paved the way for trade and transit links such as regular direct flights, local media and analysts said.

"This meeting means that the two sides are going to enter an era of negotiations," said Chao Chien-min, a political analyst at National Chengchi University in Taiwan.

"Yesterday's encounter should pose no problem, because it did not touch on any political topics," he said. "This had to do with Taiwan people's actual interests, so how could anyone oppose it?"

China, which has about 970 missiles including the world's most powerful cruises, has claimed self-ruled Taiwan as its territory since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949 and pledged to bring the island under its rule, by force if necessary.

Political differences have effectively barred high-level contact between the two sides for the past six decades, but Taiwan's economy depends increasingly on China.

Chinese President Hu Jintao and Taiwan Vice President-elect Vincent Siew (Hsiao Yueh-sen) talked one-on-one, mainly in private, for 20 minutes with 22 delegates aglow at the April 11-12 Boao Forum for Asia in southern China.

Hu and Siew, who attended in a private capacity, avoided politics in the five broadcast portions of their meeting.

Local media bannered the story across their front and inside pages, pronouncing it the highest level Taiwan-China meeting since 1949 and a turning point in chilled relations.

"Both sides of the Taiwan Strait took a big step forward," the United Daily News said in an editorial on Sunday. "The Siew-Hu meeting has more than just symbolic value."

Taiwan media detailed Siew's four-point agenda of more direct flights, more Chinese tourists, normalized trade ties and the resumption of negotiation mechanisms.

He was quoted saying China would continue promoting economic cooperation, more direct flights and increased tourists.

Direct flights are banned, except during holiday seasons, for security reasons, usually forcing layovers in Hong Kong or Macau. Chinese tourists seldom enter Taiwan due to the island's fear of security breaches and overstays.

Taiwan's Liberty Times reported that only the current government is empowered to negotiate with China. Its also jabbed at President Chen Shui-bian, the island-wide daily's paper said.

Chen, who was first elected in 2000 and term-driven next month due to term limits, stoke greater independence from China. Siew and President-elect Ma Ying-jeou of the Nationalist Party (KMT) won the March 22 polls and will take office on May 20. Reuters

SPORTS

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WHAT'S INSIDE

- Immelman keeps his distance /A34
- 'Warriors' playoff hopes still alive /A34

Express too hot for Tigers

By Jane Navarro

ARIEL TORE COCA-COLA'S COME APART WITH A BARRAGE OF three-pointers early in the last quarter and went on to score a convincing 102-95 victory last night in the Smart-Philippine Basketball Association Finals Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Wynne Arboleda, Arwind Santos and Rommel De Ocampo combined for six triples in a seven-minute span that boosted the Express out front and eventually turned the Tigers, who absorbed their first defeat in four games.

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- Autocar AIRAH Car of the Year 2007 all winner, Large SUV Category, Autocar AIRAH (Malaysia) 2005/2006
- "Your Car of the Year", Caravan Club (United Kingdom) 2006

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Air21 Express too hot for Coke Tigers

From page A11

Adebola, Ilanwa and import Steven Thomas finished with double-double figures as Air21 piled up their second win in four games while handing the solo lead to idle Sta. Lucia Realty.

"We took advantage of that opening and luckily our shots went in," said Air21 coach Bo Perasol, referring to the three-point splurge that allowed the Express comfortably ahead, 81-70, with barely four minutes remaining.

Perasol also credited the Air21 crew's quick ball movements that saw the Express rotate a total of 29 assists, a far cry from their conference-worst average of 17 assists per game.

Sharma, who enrolled his first seven attempts before finally scoring on a two-handed slam over Ap Taulava in the second quarter, wound up with 21 points and 14 rebounds for the Express, who limited their opponents below 100 points in the previous six victories.

Aside from bumbling their 6-foot-5 Centerstuff, Adebola also came up with 17 points, 11 assists, five rebounds and a steal.

The scores:

Final Game

AIR21 (92) — Thomas 31, Ilanwa 21, Ilo 17, Adebola 12, Dionisio 10, Cleveland, Wainer 2, Dela Cruz 2, Tolentino 0.

COCA-COLA (81) — Green 28, Dyke 10, Daniels 11, Baclaan 10, Yeaney 6, Arboleda 5, Castro, Tangkinsley, Sakai 2.

Quarters: 21-17, 45-41, 67-62, 92-81.

Second Game

MILKMEN (84) — Sangs 16, Fontanosa 13, Robles 11, Jamisola 11, Pingris 10, Cortez 7, Reyes 5, Rosales 4, Pinto 3, Tagaro 2.

BLUE WATER (80) — Williams 25, Ayala 16, Mamaligas 13, Cardona 10, Alapag 8, Pilapil 6, De Ocampo 6, Fermin 2, Pena 2, Cuan 1, Ebarle, Ramos 0.

Quarters: 19-20, 40-45, 71-62, 84-80.

AIR21's Marvin Cruz steals possession from fallen Nick Belasco of Coke as George Gervacio looks on.

Uzbek No. 1 crushes Mamiit, secures Davis Cup tie

By Musong R. Carillo

EVEN COCO MAMIIT BLESS HIM FOR HOW hard he tried, couldn't keep the Philippine dream alive.

Mamiit was into a stonewall in three firsts Saturday and the Uzbekistan No. 1 clinched the Davis Cup Asia-Oceania Group 1 relegation tie with a surprisingly easy 3, 6-0, 6-0 victory over the Bamboo-set Filipino-American.

Ionnite punished Mamiit right from the start with a splendid all-around performance, winning in just one hour and 55 minutes at the PCA courts to deal the Filipino ace his worst Davis Cup defeat.

Eric Taino earned some consolation of sorts by beating Ajay Unabia 6-4, 6-0, in the meaningless second reverse singles that ceaged the final score at 3-2.

"He (Ionnite) had answers to everything," said Mamiit, who lost for just the second time in 12 Davis Cup matches. "I tried everything I got, did whatever I could. But I guess that's the way it goes."

Ionnite, the world No. 156 who opened things up for Uzbekistan with a straight-sets win over young Patrick John Tiorro on Friday, broke Mamiit in the fifth game of the third set to secure the match.

The Uzbek served out the encounter at love.

Mamiit immediately went to the Uzbekistan bench and congratulated each member of the team before returning to the court to address the crowd. He tapped his chest lightly as if to tell them that even his big heart wouldn't get him past the big Uzbek.

"I felt like I fought really hard for my country," said the 31-year-old Mamiit, who will head back to the United States to play a full schedule in the pro tour and try to get back into the world's Top 100.

"We just have to keep on fighting, there's a lot of potential for Philippine tennis," added Mamiit, who kept on egging himself up between points during the match. "I think the key here is that we all have to believe that our country belongs to the group."

He was dropped the Philippines back to Group 2 where it will play either Kazakhstan or Taiwan in September. The Kazakhs led the Taiwanese, 2-1, in press time.

The Philippines fell on the brink on Saturday when Mamiit and Taino, the two figures chiefly responsible for reinvigorating tennis in the country with several Southeast Asian Games gold medals and an Asian Games bronze, lost the doubles to Ionnite and Ruslan Khaitov in four sets.

"It was a match that could have gone either way" Mamiit said of the 6-7 (10-12), 7-5, 7-6, 8-7 loss. "Had we won that match, the pressure would have been on him (Ionnite) today."

The Asia Oceania Group belonged to Mamiit on Friday when Ionnite surrendered in the third set as the Uzbek romped up on both thighs.

COMES known returns to Civil Hands.

Pacquiao won first fight vs Marquez

BARE EYE

Arcadio Arevalo

(To accommodate a special request, we are reprinting the result of the first fight between Manny Pacquiao and Juan Manuel Marquez in May 2004 as covered by Reach Dreisbach.)

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—All wounded, bloodied and knocked down his opponent three times while fighting with an injured hand and a bad foot, Del Monte Pacquiao emerged a super-hearted and super gallant crown grace against Mexican Juanito world champion Manuel Marquez runs ended a split decision here Saturday night (Sunday in Manila).

Pacquiao, a strong favorite, advanced, then surge openly when it dawned upon him during a television interview that he had failed his scouting report.

He said he felt he had won the 12-round bout convincingly after flooring Marquez three times in the first round and bowling hefty blows in the rain, exciting bout.

Marquez, showing up to the press fight, pressure with a swollen face while unceremoniously pushing an ice bag over his mouth, claimed he, too, had been robbed.

Both fighters said they would like to do it again and promoters readily announced a rematch would be worked out.

* * *

Marquez looked like a greater sitter being spanned down in the floor by big left straights three times in the first round, the last sending him flat on his back, before slowly getting back on his feet to barely beat the count.

But the Mexican did not did to call down the Mexican double world champ. Pacquiao failed to deliver his bread-and-butter combinations after his left hand ached and swelled starting the second.

He also suffered a badly blistered right toe which he said he had to nurse the past three games.

"We got to move the ball better than the previous games," said Pacquiao.

In the other game, Dondon Hontiveros scored 23 of his 27 points in the second half as Magnolia whipped Talk 'N Text, 93-86, for its second straight victory.

The Beverage Masters have now tied the Phone Pals and the Express at 2-2.

Hontiveros topped his 25-point effort going 9-13 of 17 from the field on top of 15 rebounds, three assists, one block and a steal that negated the combined efforts of Coca-Cola's Jimmy Alapag and George Garcia Jr.

From his usual 30-point output, the 6-foot-9 Ateneo swingman only 16 points and 11 rebounds this time even as Gerdan, son of PBA great Ramon Fernandez, had a solid and impressive debut with 26 points, six assists and three steals.

Gora Cola's defeat took the luster out of Mark Telan's foraging into the record books as the 34th member of the elite 1,000 offensive rebounds club.

Sharma, who enrolled his first seven attempts before finally scoring on a two-handed slam over Ap Taulava in the second quarter, wound up with 21 points and 14 rebounds for the Express, who limited their opponents below 100 points in the previous six victories.

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Quarters: 19-20, 40-45, 71-62, 84-80.

Stroem siblings steal Supertrikids show

TUBE SIBLING TROJAN OF KID AND Erik Stroem did their fellow elementalists proud by walking away the respective divisions in yesterday's Supertrikids Multisports Festival at Ayala-Alabang Village in Muntinlupa.

Kia won the 5-10 age category, clocking 11:06.36 for the 100m swim, 1.7K bike-Pebe run race that started and ended at the Metro Park, while Erik made his mark in the 11-12 group, clocking 10:56.36 in the 200m swim-3.4K bike-1.7K run race that drew more than 400 participants including the 37 older participants who joined the adult open event.

The top finishers received medals and prizes in kind from Mastiesbah which co-sponsored the event together with Inquirer and the Ayala-Alabang Village Association.

The other twelve champs were:

Boys—Mark Justin Torres (Liceo), Sebastian Chipe (7-8), Nonoy Mabasa (9-10), Gabe Angeles (Don-E-St. Jerome Siem (9-10), Mathew Torres (7-8), Jethro Ortiz (9-10).

Agustina up grabs victory laps

Girls—Chloe (Liceo), Jam Emanuel Gervais (7-8), Hailey Jewel Gonzales (7-8), Pamela Sison (9-10), Abby Agustina (9-10), Lindsey Ruth Ramos (9-10), Marissa Jones (11-12), Monica Jones Salvador (11-12).

Adult open winners like-fast there

(OPEN) Women—Pamela Chipe (40-49), Nonoy Sibley, Grandmaster

SPORTSWATCH

Musclemen compete for PP slots in Asian bodybuilding

BEAUTY—MERLYNN VIE BODYbuilders from all over the country are vying for slots in the Asian-Pacific Championships slated April 19 and 20 at the Cubao Grand Convention Center.

Former Mr. Philippines and tournament organizer Dennis Delgado said the national selection will be held on April 22 at the Betterbest Hotel's Teatro Centro in Lahug.

Events on top are Masters (40-above), Juniors (23-under), Mr. Athletic, Mr. Physique, Bb. Physique and compact pairs.

"Huge doses of the titles they won in previous contests or wherever they are based now, all local athletes must join the national selection," Delgado stressed.

Participants include California-based Ric Tarrats, Miami Bodybuilding Champ Rodrigo Gomez Jr., Ray Pierno, Dubai Open winner Ronnie Silagana and national champion Dexter Lorenzo.

Checkmate classes start

MUNTINLUPA POLICE CHIEF SUPT. RODOLFO Bienvenido Olivan III will lead the ceremonial opening of the Muntinlupa Chess Academy's summer classes at the Alabang Town Center Activity Center at 10 a.m. today.

Classes will run from April 14 to May 16 every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 2 to 5 p.m. at the ATC Activity Center.

Registration fee is P1,000 per student. Interested parties may call Ms. Ma. Cristina Ramos at 842-4611 local 2000 or 0917-8111-000.

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Heritage Cup gets going

CHAMPIONSHIPBOUND MR. DEPCTED TO test their winningest fighters in the UGBA Heritage Cup 9 Bulldog Derby starting at 4 p.m. today at the San Juan Coliseum.

United Gamecock Breeders Association president Rene "Boy" Diaz said all winners in last year's dog derbies will see action in today's event, which dangles a guaranteed purse of P75-million for an entry fee of P1,000.

Today's qualifiers will advance to the semifinal round on Saturday, also at SJC.

As of yesterday, 22 participants have scored a perfect three wins, among them Bibby Enriquez-Dolly Prieto, Honey Yu, Alex Tang, Ben Castro, Gov. Edgardo Dag, Lanny Flores and Tong David.

PCAP 5-rocker in Makati on

THE KIWI 5-LEG OF THE PBBV COOKers association of the Philippines 5-Cock Derby Series gets going today at the Makati Coliseum with Mayor Bonoy Ramos making his bad in the PCAP Cocker of the Year race.

Ramos' entry, 6T-R, emerged co-champion with Rudy Albano and Jimmy Ang's Jona Modesto tells to the third leg last March 16. 8TR and Pedro Rigor's Samson birds are currently 1-2 in the cocker race.

Among today's top contenders are the entries of Arman Santos, Richard Sales, Ben Ito Yraola, Bibby Enriquez, Alex Sicoc, Ace Montemayor, Emil Dhua, John Cagayan, Mediamulan brothers, Lito Cifelino, Rudy Salud and the LSM group.

Sharks rip Dolphins for solo lead

MANILA DEFENDED SERIES 2 CHAMpion Cebu for 22 hits and came up with a 10-3 victory yesterday to seize the solo lead in Baseball Philippines' Series 3 at the Rizal Baseball Stadium.

Jolly Barrogo, a 30-year-old former member of the PP softball team, went three for three, including a two-run double in the seventh that gave the Manila a 6-3 lead.

Charlie Labrador pitched eight hits in six innings to claim Manila's third straight victory in this tournament sponsored by Concessity Sports, Inc.

Bonnie Jamin finished the job for the Sharks, who took advantage of the absence of Cebu top pitcher Joseph Orillana, last year's MVP.

Sandy Cirilo, Jeffrey Anilo and Nico Cirbico took turns at the mound for the Dolphins (2-1), who were pounded their worst outing of the season.

The Antipolo Pilgrims trounced the Tanauan Bulls, 7-1, for their second straight victory.

BATTANGAT Jay Laurel (right) slides too late to second base as Antipolo's Allan Bautista tries to complete a double play in the second inning.

SHAKEY'S V-LEAGUE

Lady Falcons post sweep

By Ramon F. Rueda

ADDISON EXACTED REVENGE AND GOT SOME more in beating a for Eastern University squad that denied it a first ever UAAP crown last year.

The Lady Falcons downed the Lady Tamaraws, 25-17, 25-11, 25-22, to sweep the first round of eliminations of the Shakey's V-League Season 5 yesterday at the Arena in San Juan.

Ara Sebastian tallied regulated tallies by Aarons in the second game for a 25-21, 25-22, 27-25 victory and claimed solo second place at 4-1.

Teaming on the power plays of guest player Nenita Bautista and Rizza Jane Lagalba, Adamson breezed through the first two sets before turning back a determined PBB Lady in the third.

"I told them last one thing: I hope you've learned your lesson," said Adamson coach Dakis Pana, referring to their UAAP title duel.

Hill, missing the services of key player Isabel Joyce Dayan who is visiting her mother in Germany, fell to 1-4 amid incessant errors.

Trailing 19-12 in the third set, the Lady Tamaraws scored off a four-touch save by the Lady Falcons and strung up three more points courtesy of Rose Ann Tagaman to cause within 19-16.

Hill ahead at 22-21, Adamson found a break when Hill's Janine Fernandez destroyed the Morayta-based team's momentum with a service ace that hit the net.

Bautista then delivered a smash, watched her next attempt hit the net, but eventually sealed the win with another spike. The opponent rattle 13 points.

Only the top two teams at the end of the eliminations will advance to the semifinals while the other four squads play in the quarterfinals along with seven-seeds University of San Jose-Recoletos and University of St. La Salle-Bacolod.

Ara Sebastian was comfortable up in the second set, 14-17, when Aarons closed it at 24-22 behind Charlene Jiminez, Ranchrest Jhukkot and Hilda Quiroz. But Quiroz herself caused the Lady Eagles' downfall.

Dynadelle Deveaudeve registered for the Lady Angs with 14 points.

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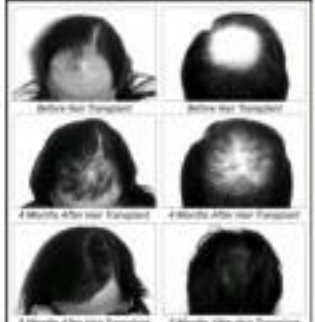

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Immelman keeps his distance

THE 2008 Masters is turning to be anything but a walk in the park for Tiger Woods.

South African grabs two-shot Masters lead; Tiger six strokes down

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA—TREVOR IMMELMAN WATCHED ONE LAST SHOT from out better than he expected in the Masters, each one keeping him atop the leaderboard and Tiger Woods farther behind on Saturday.

Immelman was headed for double bogey or worse on the 15th hole until his ball somehow stopped on a steep slope toward the pond, allowing him to escape with par. On the 16th, he bathed instantaneous to his ball—"Sit down," he pleaded—only to see it stop 20 inches away for a final birdie and a 3-under 69.

That gave him a two-shot lead over Brandt Snedeker, two players in their 20s who will get their first taste of major championship pressure in the final group on Augusta National.

Perhaps more importantly, Immelman stayed six shots ahead of Woods.

Under the easiest conditions in August in three years, Woods had to settle for a bogey-free round of 68 that was perfect. By the worst he could have shot. He has never won a major when trailing going into the final round, and he has never won a US PGA four-event when trailing by more than five shots after 54 holes.

"If I had made a few more putts, I'd be right there," Woods said. "But I'm right there anyway."

Cloudy afternoon

That depends on the four guys in front of him, none of whom has ever won a major.

It starts with Immelman, who was at 11-under 205 on a cloudy, windy afternoon that included a 46-minute delay because of rain.

Snedeker steadied himself after three straight bogeys around Amen Corner, getting those shots back over the final five holes for a 2-under 70 that put him in the final group.

Steve Flesch was the last lefty in his pairing with Phil Mickelson, also finishing with a birdie for a 69 to reach 6-under 208. Rod Curry, among four players who had a share of the lead, shot a 66 and was another shot back.

Curry has the most experience on this kind of stage, having played on two Ryder Cup teams. The English rookie scored for a sloppy bogey on the 13th with an 8-iron to 6 feet for birdie on the 16th, one of only four in the third round.

Unexpected

Flesch wasn't even expecting to be at the Masters, qualifying for it the year by winning two US PGA Tour events against weak fields to finish among the top 30 in the money list. Now he is only three shots back with 18 holes to play.

Standing on the 13th green before sinking his 4-foot birdie putt, Flesch gazed at the huge leaderboard.

"I was curious like everyone else—what did Tiger shoot today?" he said.

It was the first time in a dozen rounds at the Masters that Woods broke 70, but he had reason to expect much more. The third round began under a light drizzle and was stopped for 46 minutes when storms rolled through. That made the course soft and long, the greens receptive. With no wind, it was ripe for a charge.

But all Woods could muster was one birdie putt outside 10 feet. Two other birdies came on par 5s when he was passing for eagle, another with a wedge inside a foot on the 17th. Woods missed four straight putts inside 15 feet on the front nine that could have turned his fortunes, and an 8-foot birdie on the par-5 18th.

Inexperienced leaders

"This is the highest score I could have shot today," Woods said. "I hit the ball as well and I hit as many good putts that just skirted the hole. But long I put myself right back in the tournament."

Six shots is close to make up in the final round at the Masters. No one has done that since Nick Faldo beat Greg Norman in 1996.

His hope might come from the inexperience atop the leaderboard. Woods was the only player within seven shots who has won a major.

"There's such a long way to go," Immelman said. "There are so many great players out there. If I see me a two-shot lead, I'm not going to do very well. I've just got to have positive thoughts and give it my best shot."

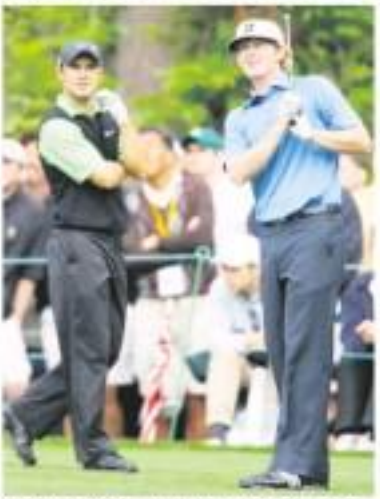
Gary Player is the only South African to win the Masters, the last of his three coming 40 years ago.

Immelman's four-iointer came on the par-5 fourth, but he was solid the rest of the afternoon and surged ahead with two spectacular shots and one incredible break.

Mickelson, coming in just three strokes off the lead, stumbled his way through a 3-over 75 that knocked him out contention heading to the final round.

"It's disappointing day obviously," Mickelson said. "I didn't play very well, and it was a day where there were some low scores out there. I just didn't shoot one of them."

AP



BRANDT Snedeker (right) will play in the last flight with Trevor Immelman as the one he one four rookie of the year winners battle it out in the final round.

NCR caps Prisaa romp with team titles

By Cedrif P. Tupaz, Inquirer Visayas

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE NATIONAL Capital (NCR) Region punctuated its domination of the National Women Schools Athletic Association Games with victories in baseball, softball and women's basketball yesterday at the Joaquin Enrile Memorial Sports Complex here.

NCR overwhelmed Central Luzon, 11-4, in baseball then dashed the softball with the expected ease, 10-4.

The NCR Tigresses turned back elimination-round conqueror Central Visayas, 73-57, in the women's basketball finals.

The triple victories that lifted NCR's tally to 126 golds came on a day when a couple of explosions rocked the city.

The first explosion at 4:15 a.m. occurred at a cathedral about two kilometers from the sports complex. Another blast followed 18 minutes later at the office of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Zamboanga blows a double-digit lead in the second half, before holding off Ormoc, 102-101, in overtime in the men's basketball finals.

Mikmon Mission won 11 golds for its victory in men's football, where it blanked Davao, 3-0, in the finals on goals from striker Peter Gobardo.

The win earned the Region 6 harvest its 48 golds for second place in the overall medal tally.

Warriors triumph, keep playoff hopes alive

OAKLAND—THE GOLDEN STATE Warriors kept their playoff hopes very much alive with a 120-118 home win over the Los Angeles Clippers on Saturday.

The victory, coupled with Denver's 129-97 loss to the Utah Jazz, left the Warriors and the Nuggets tied for the eighth and final Western Conference playoff spot.

Both teams have identical 48-32 records with two games remaining in the regular season, although the Nuggets would clinch the tiebreaker should the pair remain deadlocked after releasing two of the three seasons they played that campaign.

Stephen Jackson scored 26 points and Monta Ellis had 23 points and nine assists to spark the Warriors.

"Everybody on this team knows we have to win the rest of our games," Jackson told reporters.

ANTHONY Losing effort

"Utah helped us today but we're still not in yet, they need to lose another."

The Warriors play at Phoenix on Monday and close out their regular season at home against Dentik on Wednesday.

Gordon Mobley led the Clippers with 30 points and 18 rebounds.

The Los Angeles Lakers and New Orleans Hornets share the Western Conference lead with the San Antonio Spurs and Houston Rockets both a half-game back.

Mikan 31
Gaddafi 0
From — Toronto Raptors on Detroit Pistons
Update at 8:30 p.m.
(All Games GMT)
8:30 p.m. — Houston Rockets at Denver Nuggets

The Lakers and the Spurs meet in Los Angeles on Sunday with the Rockets playing in Denver.

The Hornets fell out of the conference lead on Saturday when they lost to the Sacramento Kings 94-91.

Utah stayed in the running for a high seed with its big win over the Nuggets.

Mehmet Okur, Carlos Boozer and Ronnie Brewer each had 20 points for the Jazz, who are two games behind the Lakers and Hornets.

In Atlanta, The Boston Celtics' backups outplayed the Atlanta Hawks starters in the fourth quarter to claim a 99-89 win Saturday and keep the Hawks reeling in seven-game playoff spot.

Atlanta would have ended its nine-year playoff drought—the NBA's longest—with a victory. Boston's 20-point fourth-quarter explosion was led by Paul Pierce with 22 points, Ray Allen with 20 and Rajon Rondo with 19.

COMPLETE BOXSCORES Boston 99, Atlanta 89 Charlotte 102, Indiana 100 Washington 108, Philadelphia 101 Minnesota 114, Memphis 108 New Jersey 111, Milwaukee 98 Utah 118, Denver 97 Portland 108, Dallas 103 Sacramento 94, New Orleans 91 Golden State 127, LA Clippers 120

Archers, Lions trump foes in Filoil opening

By Jasmine W. Payo

A LOT OF THE SUSPENSE THAT HOUsered over the opening day of the Filoil Flying V Preseason Invitational Cup centered on the much-hyped rookies of La Salle and Ateneo.

Small wonder then the fans of the Archers and the Eagles seemed to conform with the performance of their prized recruits.

La Salle's newbies got their minutes and helped the UAAP champions to a 69-53 rout of Jose Rizal University yesterday at the PhilSports Arena.

Ateneo, on the other hand, kept their highly touted freshmen almost under wraps and got hammered by San Sebastian, 70-61.

The veterans still showed the way for the winners, with JV Casio firing 19 points to lead the archers.

For San Beda, which was hammered by the addition of another Filipinos in Brooks Velo, long-time coachmen Pong Escobal and Ogie Menor did most of the damage in a crucial run that broke the game wide open.

The Archers' rookies, led by La Salle Zobel's David Joshua Webb and Jayson Castro, Mikel Villanueva, chipped in their share, helping Casio and Mon Matienzo-Bailey give La Salle a 40-29 spread late in the third period.

"We tried to play a decent game, but we're not yet in game shape," said La Salle coach Franz Pumaren.

Eddie La Salle's freshmen, Bonnie Tan with 13 points, Ryan Arana (Son of Chiang Kai Shek and the Cubs' Nino Rubia only saw limited minutes.

The scores
Textsome
LSB 69, JRU 53—Casio 19, Sam 14, Menor 12, Hernido 11, Tapuan 7, Lastre 4, Morales 4, Ganuelas 2, Pascual 2, Tuvera 2, Eda 2.

AdDEC 61—Ito 17, Al Ramadi 15, Bacho 8, Tabanal 6, Baba 6, Rosario 5, Long 4, Balabo 2, Ramos 2, Hayes 0, Ambrol, Gumapac, Dias 0.

Quarters: 10-13, 22-26, 32-41, 39-61

Second Game

LA SALLE 70—Davis 18, Baraso 14, Mangahas 12, Bagtzang 7, Manuwale 7, Belen 4, Villanueva 3, Abiera 2, Pinkham 2, Rosella 2, Webb 2, Lao 0.

ADDU 61, UA—Wilson 17, Hayes 8, Gagate 6, Ibanes, Aquo 5, Mahinay 5, Mercado 2, Kalingding 2, Lopez 2, Adamos 2, Mabale 2, Pendon 1, Ryan 0, Espina 0, Mendoncillo 0.

Quarters: 10-13, 28-28, 41-50, 61-70

Tagaytay rules national youth shooting tilt

NATHANIEL "Tac" Padilla (white shirt) presents the overall championship trophy to Tagaytay City players and officials.

TEAM TAGAYTAY WON SIX OUT OF 10 gold medals to bag the overall title in the Mayor Freddie Tinga-PSSA/NYSC-National Youth Development Program Invitational shooting championship Saturday at the PSC range in Rizal Memorial.

Twelve-year-old Eldrik Sumagui kicked off Tagaytay's impressive campaign by firing 592 points to top the air pistol Grade 6 girls. Her bear Albert Abbon of San Pablo City's Grace and Youth School by eight points and 17-year-old Alyssa Quevara by 10.

The other Tagaytay gold medalists were 17-year-old Simeon Gonzales, who outlined 596.7 to air pistol men's category; Sharon Gonzales, 16, air pistol women's category; the team of Mark Edward Arana, Simeon Gonzales and Rhyme Egido in air pistol standing boards; the team of Joshua Sumagui, Kelvin Santiago and Angel Cabrera in air pistol bench rest, and the team of Edward Malapajo Jr., Kyle Malapajo and Kelvin Santiago, all in the men's teams.

Other gold winners in the one-day shoot-fest sponsored by Tagaytay City and supported by Spring Cooking Oil and Thomson were Ebony City's Jaymee Mabini, air rifle bench rest men's category; Diana-Nicole Rabinian, air rifle women's event; Mabini City's Henry Gerali, 370.9 in air rifle men's category, and Tagaytay City's Elyne Cuizon, Camille Adriano and Anabelle Cuenco, air rifle women's category.

"The future looks bright for shooting," said reigning pistol champion and SPDP chair Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla, whose daughter Ellen finished second in women's air pistol.

Illam, Bacolod big winners

THE INTERNATIONAL LITTLE LEAGUE Association of Manila (Illam) and Bacolod City dominated the 2008 Little League Philippine Series by rolling over divisions each in the boys' baseball and girls' softball, respectively, yesterday at the Alabang Country Club grounds.

The Illam skippers overpowered Ice Haus Inc. in the Major League (11-12) boys' baseball finals by keeping their big League (11-12) title and winning the Junior League (13-14) and the Senior League (14-16) crowns.

The outfielder from Negros Occidental applied Bacolod's success as the country's crowning ground of topnotch players by topping the Major League and Senior League after entering the Junior League phase, a division they have dominated since 1997.

Only Team Manila succeeded in breaking Bacolod's stranglehold in softball when the Golden Girls regained the Big League title and earned a trip to Guangzhou in China for the Asia Pacific championship this July.

The Golden Girls gifted the new Manila Charter president, Gwendoline Che Bernstein, with his first championship following a 9-1 victory over Illam behind a three-hitter by Stanley Shoemaker from Jennifer Pangilinan.

Tacoma City topped Major League boys' baseball, crushing Mandaluyong, 8-2, to qualify for the World Series regional elimination at the Hong Kong Disneyland, also in July.

It was another painful setback for Mandaluyong, whose Junior Leaguers bowed to Illam, 7-16, in a trepidation five-inning title rematch.

Illam also foiled Muntinlupa in Big League baseball, 7-6, as Angel Signoria doubled home Ramie Gichico, who himself had walked and doubled, for the winning run.

It was also at the expense of the Muntinlupa lassies that the Bacolod girls grabbed the Senior League softball crown, 7-2.

Bacolod, the World Series 2003 Junior League champion, edged Illam, 5-3, to keep the division crown.

Illam scored Tacoma, 10-2, in side Senior League baseball while Bacolod topped Major League softball, beating Cavite, 7-2.

So bounces back

Downs Indian GM, regains share of top spot

WESLEY SO After each round loss

DUBAI—FILIPINO GRANDMASTER Wesley So came back with a vengeance on Sunday, beating Sri-19 GM Abhijit Gupta of India to regain a share of the lead after seven rounds in the 10th Dubai Open at the Dubai Chess and Culture Club.

Still steaming from a stunning sixth-round loss to GM Merab Gagunashvili of Georgia, So bested Gupta with the white pieces to move into a three-way tie for the top spot with Gagunashvili and Chinese GM Chen Li.

The 14-year-old Filipino campaigner from Buena Cavite now has six wins and one loss in the 122-player tournament.

Gagunashvili (Elo 2653) halved the point with the sixth-seeded GM Gabriel Arutinian of Armenia, while Chen (Elo 2591) trounced FM Saleh Salem of UAE to raise their total to six points.

In the eighth round, So will play black against the fourth-seeded Iranian GM Ehsan Ghaem Maghami, who trounced world Junior champion GM Ahmed Adly of Egypt.

GM-candidate Julio Catalino Sadorra crumbled No. 73 FM Saleh Al Mahayri of Syria and Dubai-based Indonesian Tofiq Adiputra relapsed. FM Oni Brahmakriti of India is down up to a tie for 35th to fifth players with four points.

Sadorra's next opponent is WGM Maria Stepanova of Kazakhstan while Tabuchi takes on Dinesh Sharma of India.

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BUSINESS

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Gov't readies ₱25-B infusion into UCPB

PDIC to package financing scheme

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT IS DRAWING UP A P25-BILLION CASH INFUSION program for United Coconut Planters Bank to make the recapitalized bank more competitive given a tougher banking environment, top government officials said.

Under the plan, the national government will place P25 billion in long-term deposits with UCPB that the bank will use to invest in government securities, government sources privy to the scheme said.

The P25-billion assistance to UCPB was confirmed by Finance Secretary Margarito Teves. He said the national government was working on a deal with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to beef up the finances of UCPB, which is among the country's top 15 banks.

"The P25 billion is coming from the national government's deposits in BSP. It has been shuttled or siphoned off by the BSP for the liquidity program," Teves told reporters.

He said Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. will package the financing plan.

Teves said the BSP would be in a better position to release P25 billion in state deposits now as the local central bank would get P340 billion in additional capital this year.

Other sources said the government has already obtained clearance from the Department of Justice to pursue this new type of financial assistance. For as long as the BSP's Monetary Board gives its consent, the DOJ is also giving its approval to the cash infusion program.

The sources said the government would

GOVT B2

IN THIS ISSUE

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■ **Yamaha starts** construction of P960-M bike plant /B6

■ **Neda chief backs** granting of food subsidy to the poor /B9

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

$1.00 = ₱41.092

As of 5 p.m., April 11, 2008

APRIL

STOCK MARKET

Range-bound trading seen

STOCKS ARE EXPECTED TO trade within a tight range this week, with the possibility of a downside (Index as immediate benchmark) due to the lack of market-moving

RANGE-BOUND B3

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

APRIL

(See also Market reports on Page B3)

IRRI hits gov't neglect of farm research

By Amy R. Remo

SCHEDULED A ZEPPELIN-SIZED RICE balance in a reasonable price will require timely investments in new technologies and improved management practices to raise rice yields, the International Rice Research Institute said.

In its news publication, IRRI director general Robert Zeigler said the world is now "paying the price for decades of neglect of agricultural research."

Zeigler noted that when the food crisis of the 1970s struck, now high-yield rice varieties, which were developed by IRRI research, were already being distributed.

"That income may have made growth more complacent," he added.

Today, IRRI said the current price rise was set against a background of "years in creasing production rates and stagnating yield growth, compounded by a long-term withdrawal of government and donor support for agricultural research."

According to Zeigler, the current standing of rice prices and tight supply has prompted many major rice-exporting countries to restrict rice "excessive emotion, which is also partly causing panic in the global supply."

For one, the world's two biggest rice exporters, Thailand and Vietnam, have capped exports below previous years' levels while India has reportedly set a $1,000-a-ton minimum export price for pounded rice.

Zeigler said that could be expected among those countries in early inflation, guarantee dominant supplies and keep local rice prices down.

The head of the Laguna-based rice research and training center also noted that normal factors were conspiring to exploit the rice system.

"As rice land and irrigation water continue to be lost to urban industrial and transportation, Asia's burgeoning urban middle class is demanding more meat and dairy, which is diverting production from land eaten to land used for feed," he said.

IRRI added that weather- and pest-related problems have also helped boost prices up.

Is there a rice shortage?

IF WE ARE SEEING LONG LINES of people queuing up to buy subsidized government rice from Bigas 2000, doesn't this mean there is a shortage of rice in the market?

The standard answer from government has been: No. There is no shortage because there are ample supplies of rice in the country. When we have, we are told, a problem of rising rice prices, not of insufficient supplies. As if to prove the point, the President is constantly shown on TV making the rounds of well-stocked rice warehouses of the Bodega-based Food Terminal (BFTI) and those belonging to private traders.

But doesn't the law of supply and demand tell us that rapidly rising prices precisely result from reduced supplies and/or increased demands? And that increasing queues are indications of insufficient supplies, a.k.a. excess demand, a.k.a. shortage?

Distorted market

Well, normally yes. My own opinion, though, is that the government is probably right in saying there is enough rice around to meet our current needs. The shortage we are told, are a matter of timing and centralized distribution, especially among the sellers. But neither can be said of the rice market in the Philippines.

The single biggest distortion is NFA itself. For a long time, it had monopoly over rice importation. Even the present "opening" of rice imports to certain qualified private parties remains so restricted that the distortions remain.

NFA also tries to influence prices of both farm level and retail, by buying high in the former by farmers, but sells low a designated "support" or minimum price for palay, currently stated in P17 a kilo) and selling low in the latter for consumers' sake (at a highly subsidized price, now at P28.25 a kilo).

Anyone can tell that buying high and selling low is not the normal way to do business, and is a matter for wonder for making huge losses, which NFA has perennially incurred or surpassed suppose. And yet its interventions hardly affect market prices, as it never has enough funds to buy more than a very few percent of total rice production anyway. Traders such consultants, say members of NFA should review its charge to it all.

Inconsistent proof

Meanwhile, it has long been of legal dictum to the point of being copied harder by the law of nature, no being made by the strong people with every rice importation done by NFA.

Lately critics are again pointing to the significant discrepancy between rice import prices announced to be paid by NFA, and published export prices for rice from our main sources (respectively Vietnam and Thailand). If true, this is actually a DTI-type crime that has been going on under our noses for decades! Does this not be need for such flagrant violations of law and more profit for favored suppliers and their government operators.

Would it be our surprise, then, that we constantly fail to achieve our self-sufficiency when certain powerful individuals could be making fortunes out of government-controlled imports?

Worse, such windfalls are being made on the backs of poor rice farmers, who have to unnecessarily bear the losing end of the highly distorted rice market. In particular, when the imports come in at the wrong time, i.e., at or around harvest season—which in our country does not often favor the cheap—the higher prices are dictated by the abundant supplies even lower than what they would be.

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito

It's the farmers who suffer from artificial scarcities, while rentseekers are said up laughing all the way to the bank.

Under margins

Apart from NFA's role, the structural distortion long perceived but supposedly corrected in the under control over the commercial rice market by suspected rice cartels. It's also a well-known fact that rice traders corner palay supplies from farmers by hoarding them money in lieu of formal credit which is largely inaccessible to small farmers.

At harvest, the latter end up with no choice but accept the usually lower price offered by the traders' lenders. Without adequate competition in rice trading, the margin between prices paid by consumers for milled rice and those received by farmers for their palay would be smaller than necessary. We have a long-accepted "rule of thumb" of a 2-to-1 ratio (actually a little more) between these two prices.

Curious, I checked data from the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) and found that this ratio has only been exceeded 1.5-1.8 in 1 in Thailand and India through the years. But Indonesia, which also has an NFA-like agency (Bulog), has the same 2-to-1 ratio as ours.

Self-sufficient

So is there in fact a rice shortage? If you believe government claims, showing rice production growth of 10.1 percent in the fourth quarter and 6 percent for the full year 2007, there our might to be enough rice in surplus. A related government statement sent me coincidentally from the presidential rice Supply and The Assessment (NEDA), showing that we are in fact self-sufficient in rice in recent years.

Why, then, are we hurriedly looking for rice to import? Is it because certain people have millions of reasons for doing so? Is the President being misled into believing that huge rice imports lobbies are unlikely for political survival? Or worse, is she in on the profitable secret?

Comments are welcome at chabito@yahoo.com

Range-bound trading seen

From page B1

bond developments.

In a separately note to its clients, online broker AB Capital Stock Trading Inc. (Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)) would likely stay locked within a 100-point trading range.

"[This] week is seen to be another week of waiting," the broker said. "The catalyst to expect to move fully wide trading range between 2,900 and 3,000. Trading activity will stay steady below the P3 billion level."

"With no news expected from bond developments, what happens in the US will largely determine the movements of the PSEi [this] week," it added.

Market players are bracing for the fallout from the latest round of earnings reports by US banks and brokerages. Bond Electric last Friday, prompting a sell-down on the New York Stock Exchange.

Last week, the PSEi ended at 2,940.16, following a tumultuous drop of 42.06 points or 1.41 percent. Trading activity stayed below P3 billion a day—a trend that will likely continue this week.

A technical analysis note from Alliance Securities noted that the stock index was presently in a "corrective mode" and could fall to as low as 2,912 or 2,879 over the near term.

"We are looking at the minor support/resistance levels at 2,912 and 2,879 as possible areas for [the PSEi] to wage a rally," it said. "The nearest supports are at 2,906 and 2,886."

With many pundits leaning locked in earlier gains, Alliance said [illegible] is now more looking at "possible buy/sell-on-strength[illegible]."

"It is a bit early to tell how the current rally will play out," it said. "The question now is to sit back, consolidate or see competing technical signals again."

Meanwhile, AB Capital advised investors to focus on corporate earnings to be released this week, especially given estimates that show a likely dip in first-quarter profits of listed firms.

"Several companies are set to release first quarter earnings next week and they will be the key to unlocking the downtrend," it said.

The broker also noted that the next big market moves would likely come on the heels of the meeting of the US Federal Reserve next week to decide on the direction of interest rates. Reuters, L. Lucas

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Gov't to consider sale of remaining Petron stake

Decision due in 2nd semester

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT WILL DECIDE in the second half of the year whether to keep its 40-percent stake in Petron Corp., through Philippine National Oil Co., or let go of it by bidding it out to private entities.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the possibility of disinvestment was on the table, but no decision has been made yet.

"That would come in the second semester," he said.

In a separate interview, Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes said there was no offer yet from any private entity to buy the government's remaining stake in Petron.

"There are no discussions yet about that," he told reporters.

The government, through PNOC, has tapped the investment Development Bank of the Philippines and ING Group as its financial advisers with regard to the Aboitiz Group's proposal to acquire Aboitiz Overseas Co.'s 40-percent stake in Petron.

PNOC has 60 days from March 13, when it received notice from Aramco of Aboitiz's purchase offer, to exercise its right of first refusal. That 60-day period will end on May 12.

In a radio interview, Reyes said the government's employment of the services of financial advisers for the deal did not mean that it would veer away from its privatization strategy and never-ending drive to restructure its portfolio of companies.

He said the government reaffirmed its privatization thrust for PNOC.

Petron chair Nicasio Aboitiz has said earlier said that the oil firm already had some informal discussions with Aramco representatives regarding the proposed buy-in.

He said Petron's focus on petrochemicals was one of the factors that drew Aramco, a $36.5-billion global asset management firm, to the company.

"We are glad to note that our strategic transformation program, which is based on our diversification into petrochemicals, is one of the main reasons why Aramco offered to buy Aboitiz's shares," he said. "They will definitely support our further expansion into the petrochemicals business."

He said Petron was near to the process of evaluating the second phase of its Refinery Master Plan, which should entail an additional investment of $1.5 billion.

The money will finance, among others, the establishment of a second Direct Flexified Catalytic Cracker (DemiFCC) unit, which should ramp up its process by 2014, as well as other projects that would boost Petron's conversion capacity and petrochemical feedstock production.

The project should start implementation by 2009, Aboitiz said.

Thunderbird ready to open golf course, hotel

By Bernie W. Dominguez

MANILA-BASED THUNDERBIRD Resorts Inc. has set its sub-operations for next year, including its golf course and hotel in Poro Point, La Union, as the firm pursues opportunities for the country to serve as its gaming hub in Southeast Asia.

In a 2007 fourth quarter report submitted last week, Thunderbird also said it plans to expand its casino at the former naval facility where it is undertaking a P5-billion-mixed-usage project.

Last November, the company announced that it was allocating P144.3 million to complete expansion projects in both Cainta, Rizal—where its first facility is located—and Poro Point.

Additionally, Thunderbird had set aside $6.3 million or some P269 million for this construction of a third hotel and casino complex in Manila City where it has entered into a preliminary agreement to lease a property in the Inland Urdaneta area.

However, the firm said last week it had dropped plans for the Manila project, citing delays in securing a gaming license.

At Poro Point in San Fernando City, Thunderbird is set to open a nine-hole golf course, which may be expanded to 18 holes depending on whether the government would agree to lease more land.

As for the hotel, it would be operated with an initial "hotel of 40 rooms although "there is space to expand modularly up to 250 rooms over time as demand merits."

Further, Thunderbird is considering to expand by 2,000 square meters its existing casino at Poro Point to allow for the addition of 120 slot machines and 56 tables as well as food and beverage operations.

Expansion work on the Poro Point casino—which currently has 177 slot machines and 110 tables—is expected to start within this quarter, with an extended operation set for the first quarter of 2009.

Last September, Thunderbird announced it was investing some P5 billion at the Poro Point freeport zone over the next five years to turn a reclamation area "into a resort destination that can compete with Phuket and Bali."

In developing a viable prime tourist destination in La Union, Thunderbird was banking on the growing domestic and international markets that are seeking more and more sophisticated locations and leisure offerings.

Last week, Thunderbird said its management believes that the Philippines "will provide additional opportunities for investments in the future, as well as entering as our hub for further expansion into southeast Asia."

Thunderbird's current operations are spread over Panama, Costa Rica, the Philippines, Peru, Nicaragua and Guatemala.

In Cainta, Thunderbird has started work on the expansion of the hotel and casino facility to accommodate a 996-square-meter event center that can hold up to 900 people.

Aside from that, planned additions include those to the hotel and leisure area as well as 200 new slot machines and 28 tables.

Completion of expansion in Cainta—which currently has 292 slot machines and 192 tables—is expected in the fourth quarter this year.

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Gov't needs $800M to jumpstart nuclear development program

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS AT least ₱800 million to jumpstart its feasibility study on nuclear power, based on initial estimates by the eight-member International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) delegation that visited the country last January.

Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes said in a briefing that the ₱800 million would cover the two-year feasibility study that the government plans to undertake, as well as construction of a new facility that would use the mothballed ₱2.6-billion Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) as a jump-off point.

This figure, he said, was just based on IAEA recommendations and was not necessarily what the government would actually spend.

In an earlier interview, he said it was important for the government to first undertake a thorough feasibility study before deciding whether to go into nuclear power generation.

The study should be comprehensive, all-encompassing. It will take us two years to do that, but that will put us in a position to make an informed judgment to say go or no go. The [government] core group is still undertaking research," he said.

The core group is composed of key experts from the Department of Energy, National Power Corp. and the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology.

The IAEA group came to the Philippines in January to visit the BNPP in Morong to help the government decide whether to pursue nuclear power generation.

Reyes had said the group would not decide for the country whether it would push through with plans to invest in nuclear power, which is used extensively in other countries.

The IAEA team would merely recommend the best way to implement a nuclear development program...whether to rehabilitate and re-fire the BNPP to convert it to a plant that used another type of fuel, or to just junk it altogether.

"In other words, they will not recommend to us to mothball it or not open it, or rehabilitate or not rehabilitate. They will just advise us on what we have to do to arrive at that decision. But we are not compelled to accept any of their recommendations," he said.

He explained that the IAEA was just up to assist in transferring technology and giving advice to countries that were considering nuclear power projects.

The IAEA could then visit a country, provide upon invitation, and find out if there was anything it could do to help a government decide on its nuclear fate, he said.

It would likewise find out if a country was reducing any safety or environmental standards related to nuclear power generation.

Right now, he said the government was just in the process of making initial studies as to whether nuclear power production was viable.

"I'm not ready to commit to anything other than studying [that possibility]. We will not just jump into anything. What we are saying is keep our options open...go and train people in nuclear technology. What we don't want is a power shortage situation," he said.

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PELAC Peso Fixed Income Fund	1.0649	1.0655
PELAC Peso Equity Fund	1.1199	1.1195
PELAC Balanced Fund	0.9766	0.9765

Local biotech to sell moringa oil to US

By Amy R. Remo

A LOCAL FIRM HAS STARTED EXPORTING mahogany seeds and moringa oil, which can be used as biodiesel, according to the Department of Agriculture Biotechnology Program Office.

In a statement, BAR&PO said countries like Brazil, South Africa and Australia have already sought mahogany seeds from Sierra International, a 100-percent Filipino biotechnology firm.

Sierra's business includes consuming oil from mahogany seeds and marketing it as either a fuel-only multiple plus-nutritional item.

Betty Hemmings, Sierra president and chief executive officer, said in the same statement that moringa oil may also soon find its way into these countries.

"Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand are interested in mahogany and the opportunity for oil extraction after they learned its use as an alternative biodiesel," he added.

Sierra also targets Japan and South Korea as its next biggest markets for moringa oil. "Because these markets are very near to us, we can deal with them and provide them responsiveness," he explained.

Meanwhile, Hemmings said Sierra was looking to complete the 500,000 hectares of mahogany plantations that can provide the demand for moringa oil as biodiesel feedstock for North American clients Inc.

To reach the 10 firm had tasked people to oil and spread its use moringa oil as biodiesel after planting 1,000 hills moringa seeds in Sorsogon.

Mahogany's leaves, flowers and pods are used as cooking ingredients. The oil, which can be extracted from its leaves, is said to be superior to olive oil and can be a cheaper alternative natural nutrient for common illnesses.

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San Miguel unit, GSIS ink Makati hotel deal

By Dustin L. Lucas

SAN MIGUEL PROPERTIES INC. HAS entered into a joint venture agreement with the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) to put up a luxury hotel project in the Makati Central Business District.

At the same time, San Miguel Corp. officials said that the company had decided to push back the initial public offering (IPO) of its property arm—originally slated for this year—to the first half of 2009 due to weak market conditions.

In a statement, GSIS said it had sealed a deal with San Miguel Properties for the development of a P1.7-billion, high-end hotel project in Makati City.

The hotel development project will be put up on a 1,766-square-meter GSIS property adjacent to Greenbelt 1 in Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Construction is expected to commence soon, and the hotel is expected to be operational by January 2011.

Under the agreement, the GSIS and San Miguel Properties will have a 30:70 percent sharing in terms of equity and income distribution to be generated by the hotel.

"We expect the dividend payments from this hotel to further bolster our actuarial life," said GSIS president and general manager Winston F. Garcia said. "It will have world-class facilities and will cater primarily to high-end tourists and businessmen."

San Miguel Properties, a subsidiary of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., is one of the leading developers of residential and commercial real estate in the Philippines.

Meanwhile, San Miguel Properties' IPO has been moved to next year, although company officials stressed that this is due mainly to the need for more preparations.

"We're preparing the groundwork for it so the IPO will happen in the first quarter or second quarter of next year," San Miguel chief financial officer Ferdinand Constantino said.

The public offering is part of the conglomerate's plan to list its 40 operating units under separate vehicles, partly to allow investors to be able to invest directly in the business units rather than in one large holding firm.

'09 inflation may fall below target

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS EXpects the country's inflation to stay below the target ceiling of 4.5 percent next year despite the increase in the price of rice, but it adds that there is a chance that this year's basis of 5 percent will be breached.

"With respect to our inflation outlook for 2009, we continue to see a benign outlook within target," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said in a briefing. "For 2008, there are risks on the upside."

The BSP said inflation would range between 3 and 5 percent this year and 2.5 and 4.5 percent next year. The BSP still hasn't given up on meeting this year's target, even though it is limited in its ability to check supply shocks.

"There will be some migration from the two that we are now going into the full harvest season, which will mean that more rice ... will be available in the market," Guinigundo explained. "On top of that, ... shipments of imported rice from Vietnam and Thailand will be coming in shortly to further augment domestic supply of rice."

Guinigundo said monetary measures pursued by the government—such as the crackdown on rice hoarders and liberalization of importation—would also help make retail prices more reasonable.

He added that, although there is enough supply in the markets, the supply wouldn't be available "at a higher price for undetermined reasons."

"Oil prices have gone up and, since the Filipinos are oil based, cost of production has gone up as well, and this will be reflected in the retail prices," Guinigundo explained.

The country's annual inflation rose to 6.4 percent in March, the fastest pace in 28 months, on surging food and fuel prices. It already exceeded the central bank's 5.0 percent forecast for the month.

Rice, the country's main staple, accounts for 9.26 percent of the country's consumer price index, the basket of goods used in measuring inflation.

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BIR expects April tax collection to hit record P80.6B

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue said it was expecting to collect as much as P80.6 billion for the month, a new record high for the tax month of April, as it intensified efforts to collect taxes from individual and corporate taxpayers.

The BIR said it had established "BIR on Wheels" to conduct mobile courses to cater to taxpayers who had queries about their tax liabilities and might soon or sooner the necessary tax forms prior to the payment date.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Nelson Aspe said if the P80.6 billion was achieved, it would be 6.4 percent higher than the P75.77 billion collected in the same month last year. It would also exceed the highest monthly collection so far of P77.08 billion achieved in August last year.

But while the BIR is proud of likely posting a new monthly record collection, the expected P80.6-billion revenue in April would still be short of the P118.5-billion target set by the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) for the period.

Aspe said there were several measures adopted by the BIR to improve tax collection. These included efforts to intensify the auditing of corporate taxpayers by using third-party source of information to check accuracy of income declarations.

The tax collection agency also allowed authorized agent banks (AABs) to receive tax payments from bank depositors and counterparties.

Revenue Commissioner Lilian Hefti earlier stressed that banks should comply with their obligations to accept tax payments even from people who don't have accounts with them.

The government through the DBCC has tasked the BIR to collect P645 billion this year, 10.3 percent higher than the P583.9-billion target last year, which the BIR missed.

The tax agency's target for this year is consistent with the government's goal of posting a balanced budget this year, which would be the first time in a decade.

Hefti earlier reported that the BIR collected P153 billion in the first quarter, up 14 percent from the P145.1 billion recorded in the same quarter last year.

Six March alone, preliminary figures showed the agency's tax take rose 6.3 percent to P59.4 billion from P52.15 billion in the same month last year.

SMB reduces IPO price

Mindoro completes deal with Panoro

By Amy R. Remo

CANADIAN MINING FIRM MINDORO Resources Ltd. said it had completed the purchase of Nickel's Minnesota Ltd.'s 40-percent interest in a package of assets in the Surigao Gold district, for $500,000.

In a statement, Mindoro Resources said it had also issued 500,000 Mindoro common shares to Panoro as part of the purchase.

"This payment is in addition to the $750,000 cash paid to Nickel's and the 500,000 Mindoro common shares issued on April 10, 2007," the firm said.

Panoro is a Canadian mineral exploration firm, which is focused on exploring large-potential gold and copper/gold deposits.

Under the terms of the sale, in the event the nickel laterite project located on the Agata property outside the first half of the year and would ramp up production to at least a million tons a year after, depending on market demand.

The firm also targets to strike a completion reserves, "initially adequate for three to five years of production at a rate of 1 million dry metric tonnes (WMT) annually."

Mindoro expects to export the nickel ore initially to three nickel smelters of China, India and Korea.

Weak market conditions cited

By Doxie L. Lucas

WEAK MARKET CONDITIONS have prompted San Miguel Corp. to reduce by almost a third the amount it had planned to raise from the initial public offering of its local beer brewing unit.

Despite this, company officials expressed confidence that the sale of San Miguel Brewery Inc. shares would push through successfully next month and raise as much as P16.7 billion.

"This is a world-class company that can withstand any [market conditions]," San Miguel president and COO Ramon S. Ang told reporters after the investors' briefing last Friday.

During the briefing, company officials said some 1.8 billion shares would be offered for P6 to P11 apiece, down from the original range of P9.50 to P14.50, that was first announced last month to P8 to P10-48.

The company had also decided to delay the IPO by three weeks due to weak market conditions.

San Miguel officials and the issue's underwriters explained that the "tightening" of the price range was prescribed primarily as expectations were refined by feedback from prospective investors.

The initial reaction from stock market watchers, however, is that SMB's ambitious IPO pricing may face difficulty given the poor appetite for equities worldwide, unless it is priced more reasonably.

Thus, at the top end of the range, San Miguel's proceeds from the IPO will now be at least P12.6 billion less than what it had initially set out to raise. At the lowest end of the range, the company will still make about P7.1 billion.

During the briefing, company officials disclosed that 90 percent of the proceeds from the IPO will be used by San Miguel Corp. to pay debt, while 10 percent will be retained by SMB for capital expenditures.

In particular, the company recorded plans to further strengthen its domestic position in the local beer market where it currently holds a 95-percent share.

The company said it would focus its efforts on some areas in the provinces where its market share stands at only 65 percent.

"We will grow the industry," Ang said, adding that beer sales in the Philippines are consistently strong regardless of whether the economy is strong or weak.

While there are problems, people drink more," he said. "When times are good people drink more."

In further news reports, Ang said that SMB would maintain its 100-percent dividend payout policy even after its shareholders limit.

Investing in SMB today is a good opportunity" he said. "Because the cut you get is a 7-percent return on investment on the dividend yield alone."

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Biodiesel firm's income up

PUBLICLY LISTED CHEMREZ TECHNOLOGIES Inc., the country's leading producer of **lauroyldiuram, resins, alcoholamides** and powder coatings, has announced a twofold increase in its earnings last year on the back of stronger sales.

In a statement, Chemrez said its audited consolidated net earnings after tax for 2007 reached P480.6 million, representing a 400-percent increase over the P94.4 million in earned in 2006.

The company—which is known for its pioneering work in coco-biodiesel—said its strong after-tax profit growth was attributed to the 62-percent rise in consolidated revenue to P3.79 billion in 2007 from P2.34 billion in 2006.

Its gross profit margin was 16.6 percent in 2007 as against 9.4 percent in the previous year.

Chemrez officials also attributed its previous year's earnings growth to the record performance of the Philippine economy in 2007 and the implementation of the mandated one-percent biodiesel blend under the Biofuels Act of 2006.

The company's oleochemical and **lauroyldiuram** product lines, which include coco-biodiesel, contributed 26 percent of consolidated revenues, while the resins group and powder coatings group accounted for the balance of 64 percent.

Oleochemicals are used mainly by the soap and detergent industry while resins and powder coatings are used in making end-user products such as house and building paints both industrial and powder form, housewares and decorative items, office and electronic accessories, home appliances and food packaging.

Since late last year, Chemrez has been gradually buying back its shares under a P500-million share buyback program announced in August 2007.

Based on Disclosures filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange, Chemrez has since then accumulated about 12 million treasury shares over the last two and a half months with a purchase value of about P43.3 million.

Doxie L. Lucas

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For parties interested to bid, schedule of activities are as follows: 1) pre-bid conference shall be conducted on April 29, 2008 at 2:00 pm, 2) deadline for the submission of bids shall be on May 22, 2008 at 2:00 pm, 3) opening of eligibility documents shall be on May 22, 2008 at 2:15 pm; and 4) opening of the financial bid shall be immediately after final determination of who among the bidders are qualified to participate further in the bidding process.

If for any reason the above-mentioned dates are declared non-working holidays, the bidding activities shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned. PDMC reserves the right to reject any and all bids/offers or to waive any technicality therein, and/or accept any such bids/offers as may be deemed as may be advantageous to PDMC. For inquiries, please call tel. nos. 840-2802 to 03.

(Sgd.) KITTY JOSEPH JOHN M. LITERAL
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

Yamaha starts construction of P960-M bike plant

New meat import restriction opposed

By Amy R. Remo

LOCAL MEAT PROCESSORS were opposing the new import restriction issued by the Department of Agriculture, stressing that the "injury that this provision will cause is clear, imminent and absolute."

The Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. said the DA had disallowed the issuance of the required clearance for importers, once the minimum access volume starting April 1 and had decided to allocate 50 percent of the MAV to livestock producers instead.

Importers and processors are left with only 40 percent with the remaining 10 percent to be kept and used by the government for price stabilization purposes.

MAV refers to the minimum volume of agricultural products that World Trade Organization members can import at lower tariffs. Imports in excess of it are slapped with higher taxes.

In an interview, Bengzi executive director Francisco Buenaventura said many processors were neither allowed to import as much as 100 percent of the volume covered by the MAV—about 53,000 metric tons of manufacturing grade beef, chicken and pork yearly.

But the industry he said, had been using only about 12 percent of this volume yearly to support the local livestock sector.

Buenaventura said that allowing livestock producers to import under MAV might result in a "shortage [of] MAV-covered products, compromising [the] price consistency."

He said livestock producers might stop producing and stick to importing and reselling.

Bengzi said the new DOF policy might discourage livestock producers from importing their products, because trading was a more lucrative business than animal raising.

It said that granting livestock producers MAV licenses might "result in these groups manipulating the situation to create a shortage of MAV-covered products to jack prices up. Or they could purposely block the entry of imports to create a shortage."

Demand for motorcycles in RP rising steadily

By Raoul W. Dumlao

YAMAHA MOTOR CO. LTD. announced early this month the start of the construction of a P960-million motorcycle factory at the Laguna Technopark in Binan, which has

September started assembly operations for bikes with engine displacements of 100cc and 125cc.

This is in line with the company's confidence in the country's steadily growing demand for motorcycles in the Philippines.

In a statement, Yamaha Motor said the new Batangas plant, which is expected to start operations in January 2009, will have an initial production capacity of 150,000 bikes yearly.

The factory which will have a starting complement of 279 workers, covers a floor area of 64,000 square meters.

Upon completion, the Batangas facility would take over the assembly of motorcycles presently being done in Laguna.

Yamaha Motor said investing in the Batangas facility was an initiative under its three-year business management plan for 2008 to 2010, which must "further growth in sales and profitability" in Southeast Asia as one of the goals of its business strategy.

Also, the company cited the yearly growth of demand for motorcycles in the Philippines, which was "backed by a stable domestic economy."

Yamaha Motor said domestic

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

"Privatization of the Former Mimosa Leisure Estate"
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The Clark Development Corporation now invites interested investors to submit sealed offers/proposals from interested investors for the Privatization of the Former Mimosa Leisure Estate. This privatization project intends to seek investors who will lease, manage and operate the existing facilities of this multi-million peso former Mimosa Leisure Estate and further develop it into a prime tourist and recreational destination in Central Luzon for a period of fifty (50) years and renewable for another twenty-five (25) years.

Interested parties are required to present their Letter of Intent (LOI) upon purchase of the bidding documents from April 8 to 28, 2008 (except Saturdays & Sundays) between 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Office of the Bids and Awards Secretariat, 3rd Floor, Bldg. 2127, corner C. P. Garcia and E. Quirino Ave. Streets, Clark Freeport Zone, Philippines.

The bid document will be issued to the prospective bidder upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (Php 100,000) either in the form of cash, manager's or cashier's check only.

CDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications or offers bids without offering any reason, and to annul the bidding process and reject all offers bids at any time prior to contract award without incurring any liability to the affected proponent bidder, to waive any formality, informality, and/or defect and to make an award to the proponent bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government. CDC does not guarantee that an award will be made.

All letters and inquiries shall be addressed to the:

Special Committee on the Privatization
of the Former Mimosa Leisure Estate
c/o Office of the Bids and Awards Secretariat
Clark Development Corporation
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(Sgd.) NOEL P. MANANSIL
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INVITATION TO BID

The DEVELOPMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES, Regional Marketing Center for Southern Tagalog will conduct a Sealed Public Bidding (Cash Basis) on April 30, 2008 at 2:00 pm at DBP Lucena Branch Office, Merchan St., Lucena City for the sale of the following Bank's Acquired Properties:

Asset No.	Description of Properties	Bank's Starting Bid
1	A 401.60 square meters titled residential lot covered by TCT No. 213411 (RN-40017) located along Mantalay St. Brgy. Pinyahan (Central), Quezon City together with a garage and front fence. * Title in process for consolidation in the name of the Bank.	P 4,000,000.00
2	A 5,000 square meters agro-residential lot covered by TCT No. T-111344 located along the Provincial Road at Bo. Talaibon, Ibaan, Batangas together with a one-storey residential building, tiled lodge, two-storey guardhouse, a multi-purpose piggery and poultry house and perimeter fence.	P 5,000,000.00

GOOD TO KNOW REMINDERS:

1. To submit their Bid on a DBP's Official Bid Form attached to a duly signed copy of the Bidding Rules
2. To accompany their Offered Bid with the required ten (10%) percent Bidder's Bonus either in the form of Cash or via Manager's or Cashier's Check.
3. To be present or on time of the scheduled bidding; no bids will be accepted once the sealed bid envelopes were opened.
4. For agricultural land:
   - The buyer shall solely responsible in securing all clearances and other requirements to facilitate and effect the registration of the Deed of Sale.
   - The DBP shall not be required to return the purchase price in the event the buyer fails to secure the necessary clearances to comply with the other requirements prescribed by law, rules or regulations for the registration of Deed of Sale.
   - The Buyer shall have the sole right to received the purchase price without interest, in the event the sale transaction is declared null by the final judgement by court, tribunal or office of competent jurisdiction.

Prior to the bidding, interested parties are enjoined to investigate, inspect or verify the properties subject of this bidding to ascertain for themselves the status of documents and the actual conditions of the properties. Permit to enter the premises may be secured from DBP Regional Marketing Center for Southern Tagalog, Lucena City.

The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

THE RIGHT IS HEREBY RESERVED TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, ACCEPT ALL BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERD MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK OR CALL OFF A BIDDING PRIOR TO ITS ACCEPTANCE OF THE BIDS AND/OR CALL FOR A NEW BID UNDER AMENDED RULES. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call our Marketing Team/Account Asset Unit at Telephone Nos. (042) 373-4404 or (042) 373-4074

(Sgd.) ADB CRISTINA C. CORONEL
OIC, Regional Marketing Center for Southern Tagalog

Neda chief backs granting of food subsidy to the poor

To help sector cope with rising costs of goods

By Michelle V. Remo

ACTING ECONOMIC PLANNING SECRETARY Augusto Santos has expressed full support for a proposal calling for the granting of food subsidies to the poor, as the current rise in the prices of commodities is feared to pull more people below the poverty line.

Santos said directly helping the poor to cope with inflation was a way to prevent the country's poverty incidence from before climbing.

The National Statistics Coordination Board earlier reported that poverty incidence in the country worsened to 33 percent of the population in 2006 from 30 percent in 2003. This, according to the NSCB, was largely because the increase in the number of basic people failed to catch up with the rise in consumer prices. Thus, many failed to meet the increasing poverty threshold.

"Everybody knows the government is already providing subsidies to the poor. But with the rising prices of commodities, more direct subsidies should be given," Santos said.

"It's true that inflation is one reason why some people fall below the poverty line," he added. He was also quoted as saying earlier that the rising prices of commodities adversely affect economic growth prospects.

The World Bank earlier said the increasing prices of commodities, especially food, could result to higher poverty incidence in some countries.

World Bank country representative to the Philippines Bert Hofman said the lending institution would consider requests for financial assistance from the Arroyo administration if it decided to implement a program providing subsidies to the poorest of the poor.

One specific proposal was the "Conditional Cash Transfer" program, which was raised during the recently-concluded Philippine Development Forum (PDF) held in Clark Field, Pampanga. PDF is an annual event where representatives from the Philippine government and foreign lending institutions meet to discuss what possible programs can be financed by official development assistance.

Under the Conditional Cash Transfer program, poor people will be given money for food provided they meet certain requirements such as sending their children to public schools and getting them to health centers for regular medical checkups.

The proposal, however, has yet to decide on the proposal and, if approved, the amount needed to implement the program.

"I am a supporter of direct subsidies to the poor," Hofman was quoted as saying earlier. He said, however, that in granting direct subsidies to the poor, the government should exercise caution against the possibility that the subsidies would go to the wrong sectors.

The International Monetary Fund earlier urged the government to improve tax collection so it could have enough resources to improve social services and directly help poor families.

A recently released survey by the IMF showed that Filipino households belonging in the bottom 10 percent in terms of spending capability use the bulk, or 64.8 percent, of their income to stay fixed.

The government had been urged to lift the 12-percent value-added tax on oil to relieve the poor from the burden of rising prices. But the IMF suggested that the government instead ensure the proper collection of revenues from the imposition of the VAT on oil, and then use the proceeds to improve social services and directly help the poor.

Because the poorest of the poor spend more on food rather than oil, the IMF explained, raising more tax revenues to implement programs that would directly benefit the sector was the prudent way to address the issue of poverty.

Gov't . . .

From page B1

file to help GSIS because the bank was virtually under state responsibility as almost 51 percent of its shares is owned by government.

UCPB is under pressure to shore up its capital in view of more stringent accounting and capital adequacy requirements and yet is restricted by unresolved ownership claims. Until the ownership issue is resolved and the legitimate owners can get its money, the bank has very little leeway to raise funds.

The bank has been the subject of a long-running ownership dispute involving coconut farmers and businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco. The bank was sequestered by the Presidential Commission on Good Government after Marcos was ousted by a people power revolution in 1986.

Yamaha . . .

From page B1

demand grew 13 percent year on year to 790,000 units in 2007.

"Considering the present motorcycle unit ownership of approximately one unit for every six people, it is expected that demand will continue to grow in the future and reach a level of approximately one million by 2010," it added.

Yamaha Motor established operations in the Philippines in 1961 through a distributorship contract with Norlik Trading Co. Inc., which meant that sales as well as assembly was done through the latter.

"However, the prospects of growing demand in the market led to the establishment in May 2007 of YMPH as a 100-percent Yamaha Motor-owned subsidiary with the capability to respond to market needs in a speedy and effective manner," the company said.

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More Apple goodness in the MacBook Air

By Raquel P. Romero

IT COMES IN A PACKAGE slightly thicker than a wafer, weighs no more than three pounds, and can fit snugly in a manila envelope.

It's not a bird, not a plane, not superman, but Apple's newest device-to-die-for: the MacBook Air.

Once again, the iconic American company has set establishing new standards for computing and mobile devices, has pushed the limits of technological boundaries and possibilities with the super skinny MacBook Air laptop—a dream gadget that the local IT media had a chance to touch, clutch, and toy around with recently.

Since Apple's CEO Steve Jobs announced the coming of the MacBook Air in January, a lot have already been written and said about the world's thinnest laptop, which possesses a mere .16 inches on its thinnest side and .76 inches on its thickest side.

Tech analysts had a heyday describing this supersized of notebooks, with some positioning its slimness impossible and unique physical design—the black-like thinness and the co-edge casing that seemed to have been carved out from a piece of aluminum stone.

But the real eye-popping goodness of this skinny piece of machine comes from unraveling the insides once you open the slimmer cardboard thin lid that houses a 13.3-inch bright display.

For this device, Apple did not sacrifice ease of use, since MacBook Air features a full-sized keyboard. Like the keyboards of other MacBooks, MacBook Air's keyboard is backlit and turns on automatically when working in darker environment.

With this feature, combined with MacBook Air's super bright TFT screen that employs LED (light emitting diode) technology, getting work done, maybe even inside a cinema or a bar, becomes a breeze.

MacBook Air's point of wonder is the solid state trackpad with a "multi-touch gesture" feature. Apple has incorporated the touch-intuitive feature of the iPhone into MacBook Air to come out with a trackpad so sensitive that a mere swipe of the fingers would make images and pages on screen zoom in or out, or move from one page to another.

For example, in the Finder (Mac OS counterpart of the Windows's "explorer" page), an image can be made bigger with just the outward movement of both thumb and forefinger on the trackpad. To zoom out the image, you do the inward movement of the fingers involved. You can also rotate the image or videos with a rotation of the forefinger on the trackpad.

To go from one website to another to the Web history or bookmarked Web pages in the Safari (Mac's Web explorer), just swipe three fingers on the trackpad and every page you've visited would come flashing onscreen—yes, it's just like flicking through images in the iPhone with your fingers.

Tech pundits have installed MacBook Air packing a two 1.5-Ghz Intel Core 2 Duo processor, while other MacBooks start at 2.2 Ghz Intel Core 2 Duo standard and are priced lower.

But MacBook Air is meant to be a totally wireless device and its functions and use can be limited or diminished only by a wireless environment. So, expect a very mobile user who doesn't really need much power from the processor and will likely be more than Web surfers or providing power point presentations.

For a totally wireless device, it has the built-in Airport Extreme (Mac's proprietary Wi-Fi device) and Bluetooth 2.1, no ports or connections for peripherals, which are neatly hidden from view, are at a minimum.

In fact, you can only see one USB 2.0 port, one mini DU port (for VGA and S-video computer devices), and no audio port.

APPLE'S newest device-to-die-for has a touch-sensitive feature similar to the iPhone.

In install additional software into this laptop that already comes with a Leopard OS (X 10.5.2 latest version), the user has two options. Either he buys the new-looking optical SuperDrive that sells for P4,800, or take advantage of Leopard's "remote disc" feature. The latter allows the MacBook Air to search for upstart drives (it other Wi-Fi enabled Macs or even PCs) and, from the installer disc inside the remote optical drive, MacBook Air can install the software wirelessly into its system.

The MacBook Air already features the .flight camera, an 80-gig hard disk drive with an option for a 64-gig solid state drive, a five-hour long integrated battery, a 1.44-MB shared Intel GMA x3100 graphics processor, a 2-gig DDR2 SDRAM memory, and 4MB L2 cache.

The MacBook Air is a cool status-elevating gadget, something that may be found on your impossible Christmas wish list or hope to win in a raffle. So, expect it to be a hot swap at P80,000.

Microsoft partners seen to reap higher returns

By Rita T. Dichoso

MICROSOFT XXX SOON available in next-generation information and application platform products—Windows Server 2008, Microsoft Visual Studio 2008 and Microsoft SQL Server 2008—during the company's biggest launch since 2000.

Bill Hill, Microsoft's worldwide general manager for server and tools, addressed partners, developers and the media during the launch held Thursday in Pasay City, asserting there that the new platforms would be ready for use, while we need to wait for partners and updates.

Security

Hill said Microsoft, which has had its share of criticism for delays in product updates, made sure that hundreds of hardware and software products from its partners were certified on Windows Server 2008.

"When we came out with Windows Server 2003, there were only about 25 certified applications," he said. "With Windows Server 2008, we have hundreds of applications ready to run on our platform.

"We have never been more ready to take a product out in the market."

Hill also said that enterprises of virtually any size can readily use the new platforms to tighten network access and authentication without having to buy additional software and hardware for better interoperability, among other things, while not much need for IT experts.

Interoperability

Interoperability is already happening, Hill said.

"There is not one company or data center running hardware and software from just one company. Customers have found the industry-to-things."

Jun Montemayor, Phils., a first-line partner of Microsoft Philippines, expressed optimism that their collaboration will benefit customers.

"Our commitment is deliver value to our customers has seen fruit reaching already with Microsoft to ensure interoperability, efficiencies and support across our products and solutions," Sun president and managing director Cynthia Montes said.

"Sun is now a single source for today's leading operating systems on the industry's most complete x64 server and storage portfolio. Customers can expect to take advantage of the virtualization benefits of both Windows and Solaris on Sun's energy efficient x64 systems to maximize their business efficiency to stay ahead of their competitors."

Sun has agreed to distribute Windows Server 2008 on the x64 servers. Microsoft, meanwhile, has enabled Solaris, Sun's own operating system, to run on "virtual hardware" created within a Windows environment.

Other partners such as Intel, HP and Dell have also expressed support for Microsoft's new offerings.

The products

Microsoft said that later this year, it will release the Windows Essential Server Solutions family of products for small and midsize companies built on Windows Server 2008 and the newest Microsoft server technologies and services: Windows Small Business Server 2008 and Windows Essential Business Server 2008.

A 2007 IDC study predicts that, by every one unit of currency Microsoft earns from Windows Vista and Windows Server 2008 this year, the software and hardware vendors that support or incorporate the products will reap about 18 units of currency in revenues.

By 2008, this ecosystem of Microsoft partners is predicted to sell more than $1.20 billion in products and services revolving around Windows Vista and Windows Server 2008.

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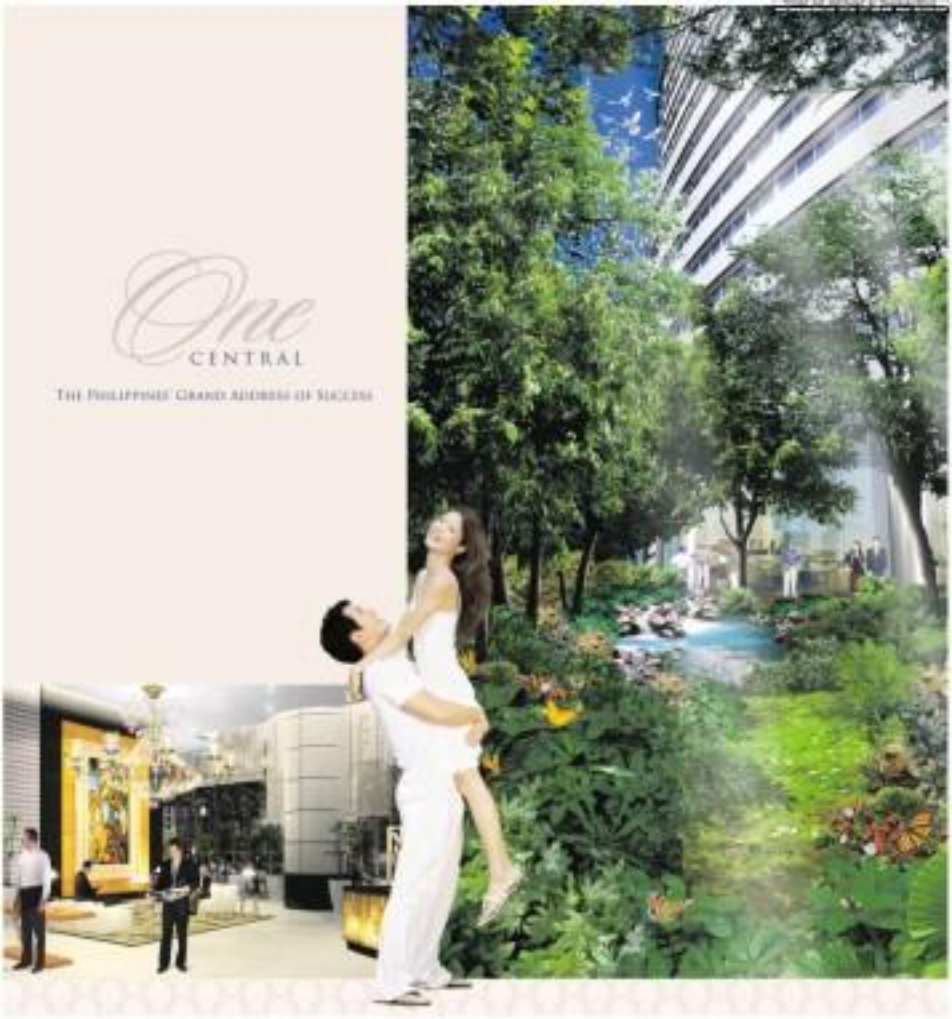

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The changing face of competitive strategy

MAPPING THE FUTURE
Nicanor S. Poblador

IT IS NOW COMMONLY ACCEPTED THAT the center of gravity of the global economy has shifted away from the US toward Asia—China and India, in particular—and in the case of agricultural products, Brazil. This observation is quite correct in the sense that these countries are fast becoming the largest economies in terms of total economic output (or GDP), as well as being the largest consumers of energy. It is also valid in terms of the international flows of manufactures and commodities (or the so-called Brick and Mortar products).

However, to conclude that the US and the EU have ceased to become dominant players in the global economy is a bit premature. The US, home of the iPhone and the Desmoiliner, continues to be the leader in the production of so-called "information goods" which include not only ICT and biotech, but also financial and professional services and media. The same is true for the EU, the largest share of economic value in most economies.

In most current discussions of global competitive strategy, it appears that the geographic dimension has assumed far more importance than it deserves. Except in the narrow sense of leveraging country-specific economic resources, developing competitive strategies from a purely national perspective doesn't seem much in vogue these days. Yasu Consultancy Services has one more or, ladies perspective in its competitive strategy than Toyota and Sony have a Japanese perspective, or Lenovo a Chinese perspective. To compete globally, what is required is a global perspective.

While the geographic dimension is currently overplayed, I believe that other dimensions are more relevant for information goods and services. It is in this sense that the face of global competition is really changing.

Over the years, competitive strategy has been undergoing a dramatic transformation from one that is a win-win game where one competitor gains at the expense of another, to one that is collaborative, where joint effort creates more economic value for all.

Major differences

In competing for markets, traditional competitive strategy stresses positioning in existing, well-defined markets, and striving to enhance market share. The new competition involves pre-positioning in future and yet undefined markets (or so-called Blue Oceans), and co-creating these markets with others. Here, firms compete not to maximize market share but to maximize value.

In competing for new products, traditional competitive strategy employs a closed business model by which firms compete by developing their own capability to innovate. Historically, GE, P&G, IBM and Pfizer have established their industry leadership positions by inventing huge gains in R&D. Increasingly, however, firms are adopting the open business model by which they share expertise with others in network clusters, and co-develop new products with others—potential competitors included. The very same companies mentioned above are typical examples of firms that have opened up their business models.

Traditionally, businesses compete for customer attention through blanket advertising in newspapers, radio and TV. Prospective customers now have very short attention spans, and increasingly, the preferred way to catch customer attention is through web-based approaches that are focused on communities of interest. Many companies are using Google and Yahoo

MAPPING 8A

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Panel Discussion I: "Refining the Legislative Labor Agenda"
PLENARY 2008 SESSION II: "Deepening Entrepreneurship: Creating Jobs"
Fellowship Cocktails

Day 2 — 15 May 2008, Thursday
Panel Discussion II: "The Changing Face of the Workplace"
Presentation and Approval of Conference Resolutions
Closing Keynote Speech by H.E. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Closing Ceremony — Keynote Speaker: H.E. GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President, Republic of the Philippines
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CANNES LIONS 2008 DIRECT & PROMO JURY ANNOUNCED

London, 9 April 2008 — The Organisers of the 55th Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival are pleased to announce the members of this year's Direct Lions and Promo Lions juries.

The Direct Lions jury with 24 members is the largest jury to Cannes, will be chaired by Marcio Salem, President and Creative Director of Salem in São Paulo, Brazil. Armin Jochum, Chief Creative Officer of BBDO Düsseldorf and Berlin, Germany, will lead the Promo jury. Judging of all entries will take place in the Palais des Festivals in Cannes during the Festival week with the winners of both categories being revealed on Monday 16 June.

"We have two great groups of skilled professionals, who as well as judging the creativity of the work, will also take into consideration the strategy, execution and results of the entries in these categories" said Philip Thomas, Festival CEO.

DIRECT LIONS JURY MEMBERS

Brazil, Marcio Salem (President/Creative Director, Salem, Jury President)
Argentina, Juan Pablo Iprado, President, Wunderman Argentina
Australia, Rylan Taylor, Creative Director, DM9
Austria, Andreas Kjelstrup, Executive Creative Director, Wunderman Vienna
Belgium, Phil van Dooren, Creative Director, Ahaa!
Canada, Matt Shiells/Ric, Executive Creative Director, Proximity Canada
Canada, Shirley Black-Taggart, Senior Vice President/Creative Director, Arc Worldwide
Chile, Luis Felipe Elzo, Comercio/Arregui, CP Comunicacion Chile
Denmark, Jens Peter Jensen, Chief Executive Officer/Founder, rapnordic
France, Dipsten Rowland, Creative Director, Rapp Collins Paris
Germany, Kurt-Georg Strubel, Chief Creative Officer, Jung von Matt Germany
Germany, Jesse Ludig, Chief Creative Officer, Philipp und Keller
India, Vishal Ramakrishnan, Vice President/Group Creative Director, Contract Advertising
Italy, Paola Iadanza, Creative Director, Ogilvy One
Japan, Yoshiaki Nomura, Creative Director/Copywriter, Pigeon, Dentsu
Malaysia, Wee Kheng, Deputy Chairman/Executive Creative Director, McCann Erickson Worldgroup
New Zealand, Mike O'Sullivan, Executive Creative Director, Saatchi & Saatchi
Norway, Alexander Grøvan, Copywriter/Partner, DMN
Portugal, Miguel Pego, Managing Partner/Executive Creative Director, Saatchi&Saatchi
Portugal, Nuno Antunes, Chief Executive Officer, Proximity Portugal
Singapore, Dora Dias, Executive Creative Director, Leo Burnett Singapore
South Africa, Glynn Venter, Executive Creative Director, Ogilvy South Africa
Spain, Ivo Kohler, Creative Director, Euro RSCG 4D
Sweden, Johan van der Schoot, Creative Director, Gothenburg
Switzerland, Beat Kuppler, Creative Director, Agentur am Flughafen
The Netherlands, Rob Doesborg, Creative Director, BBDO Amsterdam
United Arab Emirates, Ed Adams, Regional Creative Director, Middle East, Saatchi & Saatchi
United Kingdom, Peter Riley, Creative Partner, 20:20 London
United Kingdom, Emmanuel Vaughan-Lee, Creative Director, Ogilvy One Worldwide
USA, Janet Barker-Evans, EVP/Group Creative Director, Draftfcb Chicago
USA, Sherry Ahrens, SVP/Executive Creative Director, Publicis Modem

PROMO LIONS JURY MEMBERS

Germany, Armin Jochum, Chief Creative Officer, BBDO Stuttgart (Jury President)
Argentina, Diego Eckardt, President/Creative Head Director, TBWA/Buenos Aires
Australia, Ross Trudinger, Executive Creative Director, George Patterson Y&R Australia
Austria, Joachim Almeier, Creative Director, DraftFcb - Vienna
Brazil, Almeier Bonin Neto, Creative Executive Vice President, Ruller
Canada, Rhys O'Donovan, President/Partner, Ignite Marketing Solutions
France, Nathalie Cherbuliez, General Director, DDB Paris
India, Shekhar Akhtar, Managing Director, Ecompose
Japan, Tadahiro Kamaya, Deputy Director, Promotion Business Development Division, Dentsu
New Zealand, Justin Wood, Group Executive Creative Director, TBWA/Whybin/Tequila
Russia, Natalia Stepanova, General Director/Owner, K2/Marketing
Singapore, Wessel Ehlers, Regional Executive Creative Director, Young & Rubicam Asia
South Africa, Joey Pestell, Creative Director, Ogilvy South Africa
Spain, Cristina Barbarin, Managing Director, Euro RSCG 4D
Sweden, Jesper Holst, Creative Director/Art Director, Mustard Holst
Switzerland, Daniela Lang, Creative Director, Ruf Lanz
The Netherlands, Mischa Kollenveld, Executive Creative Director, JWT
United Kingdom, Shifford Chandler, Executive Creative Director, The Marketing Store
USA, William Brown, Chief Creative Officer, North America, Arc Worldwide

Launched in 2000 and 2006 respectively, Direct Lions and Promo Lions have since nearly tripled in entries over the years with participation from around the globe.

The 55th International Advertising Festival will be held 15-21 June 2008 in Cannes, France.

MBA students gain in 'virtual' stock market investments

A 31-YEAR-OLD ROMBAN EX-painter topped a virtual stock market showdown for students from the master in business administration programs of local universities and colleges all over the country.

Hyung Suk Lee of the Asian School of Business posted a 11-percent gain for his P1-million "virtual investments" to emerge on top of the 2nd PSE Citiseconline MBA Stock Market Investment Challenge.

The tilt is being sponsored jointly by the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) and CitiseCOnline.com Inc. (COL), as part of their respective programs encouraging stock market investments. The MBA showdown is a more advanced level of the PSE's Stock Trading Fundamentals (STF), which caters to undergraduate students.

Lee's gains contrasted with the 13-percent average lost suffered by the market during the staging of the tournament from Nov. 19, 2007, to Feb. 21, 2008.

Another Ateneon, Ethel Sanchez, earned second place honors with an 11-percent increase in her virtual investments, while Oliver Dwight Layog of De La Salle University Graduate School of Business, placed third with a 9-percent gain.

Aside from Lee and Sanchez, nine more Ateneo graduate student made it to the top 10—

FIRST place: Hyung Suk Lee, an MBA student at the Asian School of Business, took a 11-percent gain at the end of the 2nd PSE Citiseconline MBA Stock Market Investments Challenge. Lee (middle) receives his trophy from PSE president Francis Ed Lim (left) and COL president Dino Bato.

Maria Francesca Mandap who placed 6th in the tournaments.

De La Salle University-Dasmariñas School of Business had another showcase, Asha de Leon who emerged 5th in the standings. The other Metro Manila top placers was Ulysses Aguilar of the University of the Philippines.

From the provinces, four graduate students made it to the top 10: third B'lan Pagtalunan of the University of San Jose-Recoletos in Cebu (8th place); 2nd Lim of Xavier University in Cagayan (7th); Vergil Demasura of Ateneo de Naga (8th); and Emmanuel Flordeliza Magpo also of Xavier University (10th).

For the achievement, Lee pocketed a trading account from COL worth P25,000 plus the bragging right for beating 229 other MBA students from 32 schools all over the country. Raul Bato, an ateneo professor who acted as Hyung's mentor for the tournament, got a P10,000 trading account also from COL.

Lee works as an accountant in a manufacturing facility in Mandaluyong. A client of COL, he had at least one year of actual trading experience in Seoul and Manila before he joined the 2nd PSE-CitiseOnline MBA Investment Challenge.

The Seoul-Ateneo expat, who is a confessed beach bum, was born in the Philippines for three years now. With a full-time job from Monday to Saturday, Lee spent 30 minutes early in the morning almost daily in trade stocks. He often browsed Bloomberg links and the charts of each company whose stocks he intended to trade. He intends to continue trading in our stock market.

Another is a strategic planner at McCann World Group.

The award ceremony was held at the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) in Makati with Peninsula Ed Lim, PSE president and chief executive officer, as guest speaker. "We in the PSE have pledged to work side by side with other groups like CitiseOnline that share with the Exchange a common desire to build a bigger capital base for the Philippine capital market by conducting an intensified investor education program," Lim explained. As the tournament winners have shown, we can still make the stock market work for you even when challenges confront it," he added.

COL president Dino Bato observed: "This tournament has highlighted the fact that anyone can take advantage of the opportunities in the stock market through the use of research and analysis, and other online tools readily available to all CitiseOnline customers."

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Mapping the Future; The changing face

From page B2-1

search-based software to peddle their wares. A local start-up, Yehey, is in this line of business.

While before, businesses form talent by developing their in-house capabilities, firms are now increasingly dependent on talent that is outsourced elsewhere through **resource outsourcing**.

Conclusion

In today's global, intensively interconnected business environment, a major challenge faced by business organizations is how to maximize shareholder value and remain growth, while at the same time creating economic value for all. Two essential ingredients of strategy are needed to achieve these long-run corporate objectives: (1) Setting up and being the control part of constellations of partners with whom to conceive and co-create a continuous stream of value propositions; and (2) Identifying unique combinations of these value propositions by engaging customers in developing customized services that meet their continuously changing—and unpredictable—needs.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of its author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is an active academic and a knowledge management consultant. He is the author of the book "STRATEGY As MYTH Volume 1: Why Today's Business Models Fail to Deliver." Feedback at map@philwebinc.com.ph)

Excellence in Any Language

PLDT backs the International ICT Awards 2008

The Philippines continues as the destination of choice for the global business process outsourcing industry, in fact, according to the International ICT Awards, the country has emerged as the world's fastest growing nation for BPOs. The panel is in the increasing number of clients and scope of services now outsourced to this country, signaling strengthened confidence in Filipino talent and competence.

The 2nd Annual International ICT Awards – PHILIPPINES 2008, held last March 13 at the Renaissance Hotel Makati recognized organizations and individuals who contributed the most to put the Philippines and the Filipino in "the top of minds of global business leaders." PLDT Business Solutions emerged as the overall winner in prestige sponsor with more Second ICT solutions that will serve BPOs.

PLDT SVP and Corporate Sales and Marketing Group Head, Orlo B. Alberto, in his keynote address said that "No matter what the language, the essence of excellence remains the same: a drive to continuously innovate yourself to add greater value to your customer. We feel so strongly. Indeed, the Philippine Offshoring & Outsourcing Industry has manifested this excellence, working together with partners in the Private Sector, Industry, & Government."

Alberto also pointed out that the industry experienced "unprecedented growth" of more than 100,000 jobs and "record revenues amounting to nearly US$5 billion."

These achievements, according to Alberto, "captured the attention of world-renowned organizations which have bestowed us with praises and accolades in 2007 – Outsourcing Destination of the Year from the United Kingdom's Outsource Magazine, recognition from Frost & Sullivan as being among the top 10 Shared Services and Outsourcing Destinations in the World, acknowledgement from Harvard Business Review as no. 1 outsourcing base for call center based BPO activities, acclaim from Diamond Consultants as 3rd in the world in terms of BPO location strategy, and recognition from Tholons of Manila, Cebu, and Davao City as top cities for outsourcing in the world."

Alberto then reaffirmed PLDT's shared vision with the industry of "USAy 10by 10 Roadmap," namely achieving 10% of world market share through US$10 billion in revenues, or by 2010. However the industry faces challenges as well: existing at shrinking US and developed world markets, as well as aggressive competition from other countries eager to cash in on the BPO bonanza. He added that excellence is the guiding standard for maneuvering these challenges, just as it remains the basic principle at PLDT as it celebrates its 80th anniversary.

B7 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008

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Belo's got a new man

By Margie Quiroga-Espino

DR. VICKI BELO has a new man in her life. And he's her boss.

Manuel Antonio M. Soriano III, who took over the reins of the Belo Medical Group Inc., owner of seven Belo clinics in the metropolis, as group CEO.

His entry was quite in a group owned by a celebrity, but Soriano's plans are not as all quiet. These include a possible public offering at the Singapore Stock Exchange where a couple of other Filipino firms are listed.

In a one-on-one with Business Monday, Soriano says he has been allowed by "procedures" the past months—studying systems and matrices for the 16-year-old Belo group which, despite its size, has remained in some ways a "mom-and-pop" type of operation because of Belo herself as management style.

He says that, to a large extent, decision-making is still very Vicki Belo-centric. But such the group's growth and expansion, the need for clearer systems and procedures is becoming more apparent. And it is his (new) role to put these in place.

Lack of sufficient systems and procedures in commercial among entrepreneurial ventures where the founder or originator of the business still does everything she did when she just started out—operations, human resources, customer service. But as businesses grow, originators need to realize that they need to organize and set systems to provide the legs for the business to stand on.

Soriano, he now becomes both the organizer and the operator.

He says his vision is to begin with the end in mind.

He knows that he may not be the most popular man in the group right now because of the changes he is instituting, but he feels these are necessary.

> New CEO looking at possibility of listing Belo Medical Group on the Singapore Stock Exchange

One of the things he did was to give different clients some autonomy in the decision-making process. In the past, everything was cleared with the head office.

He also points out that the work ethics required for the Belo Group are out of the ordinary.

"Our patients are out of the ordinary. They are outside the ordinary course of business, the expectations are higher," says Soriano, referring to the rich and famous clientele of Dr. Belo.

Classic MBA case

The Belo case is a classic case for MBAs.

"We are establishing the matrix, the fundamentals and the accountability systems. We need groups role definition of each employee. We need to put a system in decision-making," he says.

Which is why Vicki Belo herself discusses the viability of buying a new machine with Soriano first, unlike before when she would just set her name from a rep with a new machine.

Cost benefit analysis now has to be inserted to, Soriano says. However, he admits decisions and analyses have to be done quickly as new technologies are always coming out, making obsolescence a constant threat.

Admittedly, not a few raised their eyebrows when Soriano, largely a real estate man, was chosen to head a beauty and wellness group such as Belo.

Soriano worked with the Madrigal-owned Globe Realty, the Campos' Greenfield Realty, the US first electronic Realty Associates and recently with Andrew Tan's Megaworld group. But he says his forty-ten years in the investment industry prepared him for his transition to the Belo Group.

Transition

The 40-year-old Soriano is with the Philippine Retirement Inc. the government owned part of the Philippine Retirement Authority, which aims to help provide guidelines and direction to those who want to reinvest into the retirement business.

Soriano also has a major axe up his sleeves—he has been teaching MBA for over 10 years.

"I have gone through hundreds of business plans and that changes you," says the marketing professor of the Ateneo Graduate School of Business.

Those business plans cover myriad industries and train the mind to be attuned to factors that affect the businesses, a company's strengths and weaknesses.

He says he has students of ten years ago still calling him for advice.

Also he has been privy to the Belo Group having had Dr. Belo, her daughter Grizelda involved with Intelligent Skin Care Inc., owner of the Belo Essentials line) and some of the group's managers including doctors, or in his classes at the Ateneo Graduate School of Business.

Family of lawyers

Business was not at the top of Soriano's mind in college. He comes from a family of lawyers. He was born in Iloilo.

Finishing high school at 15, he graduated from college with a degree in History at 19 and proceeded to law school. But law was not his cup of tea, so he looked for work.

After landing a job at Globe Realty in sales and marketing, he pursued his MBA at De La Salle University, where he also began his teaching career.

Last year, his father got sick and he decided to take up a more schedule. He left Andrew Tan's group and joined Belo.

"I thought Belo was going to be much easier because of the Vicki Belo brand," he says.

And true enough, himself now he joined a very strong corporate family. His friends proved this. He owes a particular trip to Malaysia wherein upon learning that he was from the Belo Group, so many people wanted to meet with him and he had meetings meetings from 7 in the morning to midnight.

The huge brand awareness for Belo is what has allowed Soriano to move for the listing of the group in the stock exchange. "The power of the Belo brand" is how he calls it.

"Vicki Belo is a maverick. Her attitude is out of the box, nonconformist. I want people to emulate out of the box thinking, including my workers, Soriano says.

But he admits he owes a lot to Andrew Tan, the low-key real estate magnate.

"He had a penchant to push my mind. You have to be there steps ahead of him."

For now, Soriano's putting in 10- to 12-hour workdays that include pursuing a doctorate in Business Administration.

But at the top of his agenda this summer is to spend more time with his wife, their 3-year old son and make another baby.

EMC Soriano was a real estate man before joining the beauty business

Son tries to step out of his father's immense shadow

By Abigail L. Ho

WHEN YOU'RE BORN WITH A silver spoon in your mouth, people automatically think you have it easy—good school, lots of toys, nice clothes, no money problems. But then, there's always a dark side to every good thing.

Jaeger Tanco, the proverbial rich kid who has been exposed to the finer things in life in all his 27 years, suffers a problem that most people born into rich families have—getting out of their successful parents' shadows.

In Jaeger's case, he relates that it's extremely difficult to make a name for himself in business because of his father's accomplishments.

His father, Eusebio Tanco, is virtually a jack of all trades—stockbroker, businessman, racehorse breeder, jeepney, property developer and educator.

The older Tanco also has extensive corporate experience in the fields of manufacturing, transportation and logistics, energy, and information and communications technology and global education and services.

Just some of the companies that the elder Tanco is involved in include Philippine Fiber Industries Co., ETI Colleges and Education Centers, Global Resource for Outsourced Workers Inc. and Bonifacio Communications.

Jaeger, on the other hand, is still just learning the ropes.

"Of course, it's hard, and there are always criticisms. I can feel it in a lot of ways, people comparing me to my father. That challenged me," he says.

COO—child of owner

He's no stranger to the "COO" jokes, whether said to his face to just on behind his back in spite. But instead of taking offense, he says he takes such position as a challenge.

Armed with a degree in entrepreneurial management from the University of Asia and the Pacific and a masters degree in business administration from the Ateneo de Manila University, he set out to start building a name for himself by establishing his own business.

He put up Comm & Soon, an integrated marketing and communications company that primarily serves the marketing, public relations and management needs of the Tancos' many businesses, and also takes on accounts from other firms.

As president and chief executive, Jaeger leads a team of young professionals—most of them below the age of 30—with the vision that he has acquired from many years of being under the tutelage of his father.

Apart from Comm & Soon, he also heads Trimarco, a Davao-based company that produces organic and authentic fertilizer and soil conditioners.

"It started with me and a friend talking about it to them. He's no IT guy and we were discussing different opportunities. He mentioned that an IT company was something we should look into," he relates.

"Since he is from Davao, we decided we put our main office there. When we were asking around, we found out that there were a lot of businesses that needed IT solutions. Of course, we were not targeting the large companies, but the small and medium-scale ones. So that's how it began," he says, adding that the company will already be two years old this year.

JAEGER Tanco takes the COO (child of owner) jibe as a challenge.

Brought up to do business

The upside of having a great businessman for a father, he relates, is that you are brought up to do business.

"Ever since, we were raised to be working in a business. Our parents taught us to be businesspeople by exposing us to the corporate world very early on," he recalls.

"We were compelled to work, to take on summer jobs, so we can start carrying our own weight. We were also taught as he entrepreneurs," he adds.

Though we are thrilled with the prospect of spending his summers working, he says he have an realized the importance of having early exposure to working for and in a business.

The desire to really be in business did not kick in for him until college, however. And when the business bug bit, it bit hard.

"When college came, I started organizing events—mostly concerts and parties, since I was interested in the space. That was when I realized that events management was a business I wanted to get myself involved in," he relates.

"I had my classes and my parents supported me all the way. I guess God's really the upside. Because I believe that it's not enough for you to have an idea to become an entrepreneur. You have to have guidance," he says.

Work in progress

Working as a reality card agent when he was younger taught Jaeger many important business truths, although, at that time, he had no idea that he was already learning his foundations as a businessman.

"I learned things as simple as wearing the proper attire for certain tasks. Like when I was promoting credit cards, I couldn't face a client wearing T-shirt and jeans. I use that it was all about how you presented yourself," he says.

"I also realized that even the simplest tasks still have an effort in the operations of the whole company. I learned the importance of every function in a company which helped me when I also made encompassing the functions of everyone within the company," he adds.

At this point, he admits that he is still a work in progress. Both Comm & Soon and Trimarco likewise still have a long way to go.

"Starting a business is one thing, but maintaining it and making it grow is another thing altogether. I still have a lot of business ideas that I want to explore, but I want to focus first on what I have already started so it can succeed," he says.

He relates that he will eventually diversify his business portfolio—when the first one he has put up has become successful enough.

Inspiring others

As a young entrepreneur himself, Jaeger also wants to encourage the youth to delve into business.

This is precisely why Comm & Soon came up with the Entrepreneurth Challenge—an intensive four-month seminar and workshop to equip the youth with the right tools to go into business as well as an inter-school competition for the best business plan.

"We saw that there were a lot of people who seemed to be entrepreneurs but didn't have the right focus. Many just aren't satisfied anymore to be just employees," he says.

To make the Entrepreneurth seminar and workshop fun for the participants, he relates that dynamic speakers with lots of hands-on business experience are invited to share their insights and their experiences.

Last year's Entrepreneurth seminar used sports principles that could be used in the realm of business.

"We want them to be 'learning empowered.' We want to enable them to learn things they don't learn in school," he says. "Really, anyone can be an entrepreneur. Anyone can start his own business."

BUSINESS Monday

Tourism turns earth-friendly

Two Philippine hotels make it to the Asean green list

By Ronnel W. Domingo

IT'S TOURISM PEAK SEASON AGAIN AND hotels are geared to cash in on the season's boom.

While the buzz words "eco-tourism" and low impact traveling bring to mind outdoor adventures, they most often involve accommodations. After all, a big part of the traveling public won't rough-it and definitely live up to comfort.

With the Philippines belonging to a region that is one of the world's tourist magnets, government and business sectors are feeling the need to encourage hotels to lessen their environmental footprints.

Last January, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) lit lamps that passed criteria for the Asean Green Hotels award.

Judging was made through the 11-point standard which takes into account that a green hotel must have an environmental policy and systems for hazard reduction; use green products; work with the community and local organizations; have a human resource development program geared toward environmental management; solid waste management; energy efficiency; water efficiency; indoor and outdoor air quality management; noise pollution control; wastewater treatment and management; and toxic and chemical substance disposal and management.

Of the 81 hotels given the award, only two were located in the Philippines—the El Nido Resorts in Palawan and the Shangri-La Island Resort in Cebu.

SEE ALSO B3.3

EL NIDO was cited among 81 hotels that passed the criteria for the Asean Green Hotels award. ANG L. NARVAEZ

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New York weddings weather economic woe

Clients were a little more careful with their budget, but still determined to celebrate in style

NEW YORK—INVESTMENT bank bailouts, home foreclosures and job losses have spread economic gloom through America but in New York, at least, there's one industry still weathering the storm—high-end weddings.

Gino makers, florists, wedding planners and dressmakers at a wedding show this month said brides were still determined to enjoy their big day with almost no expense spared.

While some couples were cutting back on accommodation, the example having only two bridesmaids instead of four, most vendors at the New York magazine Weddings Showcase in Manhattan said they were yet to see a serious dip in business.

"So far I would say compared to last year, this year couples seem to be spending just as much," said shop fabrics dressmaker, consultant Elizabeth Lefferson, which offers invitations at anywhere from $600 to $1,200 for 100.

Her co-owner, Beth Sabbisi, added: "People still get married during recessions. It's a tradition, people still need invitations."

It's debatable whether anybody really needs to spend $13,000 on a personal trainer when they're getting a personalized package that also includes vitamins, appetite suppressants and a nearly green drink that resembles a grass smoothie.

IN NEW York, there's one industry still weathering the storm—high-end weddings. AFP

A VENDOR (right) discusses wedding themes at a wedding show in New York. AFP

David Kirsch admits that "no one bride wants to wait until the last two weeks," but he says his clients have lost as much as 35 pounds on the two-week program. One celebrity client had to have her dress sewn two days before the wedding.

"It is essential. Weight means emotional flaw, mental health and well-being!" Kirsch said. "When those doors open up and you're about to walk down the aisle and there are 250 pairs of eyes on you, there's that moment," he said.

Frances Taveras, 27, who recently got engaged, said most of the services in the show were outside her budget, so she was just there to get some ideas.

"I had a very small budget in mind so the financial situation isn't playing such a big role," she said. "It's quite conservative at $20,000."

Rachel Gonzalez, a wedding planner at Always a Bridesmaid, said she was seeing longer engagements as couples take a little longer to save enough for the wedding, but she still has plenty of talent for low $10,000 full-service packages.

Gonzalez said her company had just started offering a concierge service to take on such roles as finding a venue or booking hotel rooms on a one-off basis with an hourly fee.

"We were just joking we're going to come up with a subprime wedding package," Gonzalez said. "A planner is a luxury. We're a necessary luxury in New York but it's still a luxury service, so the concierge is meant to bridge that gap."

Jerry Sibal, whose company Design Parties does show decor that can cost up to $500,000, said the small dollar and euro retail prices had pushed up the cost of imported flowers by as much as 20 percent in a year, but New Yorkers were still buying.

"When I was in Europe, people don't spend because they're afraid to be different," he said.

"You'd think people from Amsterdam would spend a lot on flowers, but no, they'll spend on nice simple bouquets. New York is different. People love to entertain and be entertained."

Celine makes Salad, Dilmore, owner of Cake Alchemy, said her costs had also gone up because of rising commodity prices, that have made flour, butter and other ingredients more expensive.

But, as with Inglis, of Bonded Flowers, said clients were a little more careful with their budget, but still determined to celebrate in style. "I'm seeing them cut as many bridesmaids as they need to be, so there's less on headquarters."

Kristen-Lee Delorme Bonet, 24, who works in a financial public relations firm, said she was planning a week-long fabulous wedding in New York and the economic woe are going to change her plans. "We look at it as it's an excuse we're going to do it, so it's not really affected it," she said.

"Unless you lose your job," her friend Sarah Chandoni, who works in Wall Street, added. Reuters

Banking on a smarter future with Smarter Piggy Bank Clinic

TODAY'S YOUTH ARE RICHER than we think. Children are getting more purchasing power with money coming from their parents and their own pockets. Because of this, kids are fast becoming the center of a growing number of marketing strategies, with more consumer goods and advertisements appealing more to the younger crowd.

While no hoop-ra promoting the youth as the heirs of the present society, it makes sense to give them the tools that will enable them to have a smarter and more mature way of dealing with money as they age.

Lorenzo Ong, president and chief executive of Pioneer Life, said:

With wealth comes smarts. Recognizing the need to foster children's money smarts, two organizations have linked arms to push financial literacy among children. "The Smarter Piggy Bank Clinic" is a project by Pioneer Life and Blue Cow Co. Inc. and aims to promote financial literacy through a hands-on method of teaching. This workshop is especially designed for students from Grades 1 to 6, and tackles money values and the importance of saving and spending wisely.

The program was co-developed with Hong Kong-based money management writer Sophia Bendz of *Rich & Smart* Ltd. and is launched as an animated literacy course for children. Running 30 to 60 minutes long, the highly interactive course focuses on the concept of the needs and wants of children through interactive games and songs that encourage the children's active participation.

One song that was used as a teaching tool was "Sabay Sabay" with some parts of its lyrics changed into ways the children normally ask their parents to buy it for them. While singing, the kids consolidated earnings items and determined which of those were their needs and which were their wants. A competition among various grade levels capped the activity with prizes given to the winners.

"Through the activities, children were made to understand how their parents earn their money (they spend) and how they as children can contribute more their money too by working hard in school and helping in household chores," Lorenzo shared. "Teaching the children the value of hard-earned money, and the difference between their needs and wants gives them the tools they need to be more discerning when it comes to the money they spend and save."

The kik of advanced learning (GSIC) Montessori School in San Juan Valley Pasig was the first to experience Pioneer's new financial coaching method for kids. The children's participation in the half-day program was overwhelming. The coaching and child-friendly nature of the program made seemingly dry topics such as finances, palpable for children as young as seven years old.

"We intentionally wanted to start a program that taught children from Grades 1 to 4. Studies have shown that it is ideal to inculcate the value of money at such a young age when a child is already exposed to consumerism, even if it is as simple as buying candy from a sari-sari store or asking their parents to buy them a toy," Lorenzo added. "We eventually aim to create a wider program that could accommodate more grade levels to be able to make it a continuum effort throughout a child's education."

Pioneer and Blue Cow, with the help of Funch Alberca, a children's book writer and illustrator, are currently working on a video for kids that shall carry on the similar objectives of The Smarter Piggy Bank clinic. The video aims to promote financial resilience to more schools in order to create smarter savers and spenders among the younger generation.

"While we have no culture that encrypts, but they are also much smarter than we give them credit for," said Lorenzo. "It's high time that we take them seriously and take advantage of every opportunity to hone their knowledge on matters that they will have to deal with in the years ahead."

About Pioneer

Pioneer is a group of companies with two units in the Pioneer Insurance, representing mainly insurance, and Pioneer Life, representing life.

With over half a century of experience, Pioneer consistently shares insurance milestones and annual premiums continue to improve. Pioneer has an extensive network around the Philippines with 34 branches. With an office in Hong Kong, Pioneer Insurance remains the only license Philippine wealthy insurance in China's Special Administrative Region.

Pioneer is heavily committed to becoming a model Filipino enterprise. It continues to expand and build new foundations, with the opening of Pioneer House Cebu as its most recent milestone.

About Blue Cow

Blue Cow is a revolution that redefines today's businesses. Presently channeling its energy to publishing and internet marketing, its ultimate purpose is to create fresh new worlds in interactive industries that stimulate with a lot of hand-in-hand participation.

Insurance is Blue Cow's first foray. It establishes a unique world of customized and savings where the traditionally opposed behaviors of savings and economics, and spending go hand in hand. This is a world driven by the bigger dream of leading Pinoys on the path to financial wellness.

Lucio Tan property group targets OFWs

MANY OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) invest their hard-earned money in real estate. But buying a subdivision house and lot or a condominium unit is not that easy for these doers, where there are so many choices available.

A property in the right location, and one that's affordable, strong complete with amenities and built by a trustworthy local developer, gives property investors not only an for their money a property that is unique in every letter. Eton Property Corp. (EPC), a residential condominium in Pasig City, targets OFWs.

All units at EPC's two all-story towers are MRI. Multi-possible through Eton Properties Philippines Inc., the property arm of the Lucio Tan Group, this project is the only condominium of its kind in Ortigas Center. Such distinction makes the EPC a prestigious address and a status symbol for its residents.

The twin tower stands in a corner lot within Garnet and Sapphire Streets and Emerald Avenue in Ortigas Center.

EPC is of the board of a financial bank and only to obtain City's Center Business District and located at the country's shopping, mass business of the newest malls in the vicinity. Residents also have the convenience of being more than workplaces, schools, businesses and a major hospital. Such location gives residents a truly cosmopolitan lifestyle.

The loft units are affordable for as low as P2 million each, with options for easy financing through Allied Bank and the Philippine Veterans Bank. The EPC is scheduled for delivery on December 31, 2011.

Tourism turns earth-friendly

From page B1 /

Sonia Mendoza, speaking for the Eco Waste Coalition, lamented the fact that only two local hotels made it to the forum's list of so-called green hotels.

Mendoza is chair of Mother Earth Foundation, which is part of the coalition on ensuring consistency.

But still, the local hotels were cited "should serve as a wake-up call for the tourism industry to institute urgent environment-friendly solutions, especially those that will curtail waste, energy inefficiency and pollutants in the daily operations of hotels and resorts," Mendoza said.

"It is now the turn of the tourism tourism industry to extend best quality treatment to Mother Nature now that we know how ill she is with the unfolding climate change," she added.

The coalition proposed 12 steps that would help hotels bring down their sort of carbon emissions while helping ease the environment.

"These suggestions are also cost-saving tips and many of them are actually common practices in many five-star hotels all over the world," Mendoza said.

"What I have observed in local hotels is that while they are implementing some of these, the staff are not trained to practice the policies," she said.

Members said that, for instance, there are hotels without the housekeeping staff still changing towels and linens everyday even if the had complied with the suggested indications that she wanted to keep using the towels... such as hanging their towels to keep using them on the floor.

Aside from the towel and bedsheet re-use policy, the Eco Waste Coalition said the follow-

ing practices would make for environment-friendly tourism business:

1. Use daylight in the hotel restaurant, lobby and restaurant for as much of the day as possible. Use energy-efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs.

2. Reduce electricity consumption with the use of motion detector light switches. Use key cards that activate power in the rooms.

3. Provide guests with cards or check-in where they can find ways to energy conservation tips.

4. Put all leaky faucets, sinks, toilets, showers and tubs.

5. Fit low-flow restrictors in showers and sinks, install dual flush toilets or place 50 sheets in toilet tanks.

6. Discover consumers and utilize it to meet your water requirements.

7. Water the plants with grey water, or water before the sun is intense and apply mulch to keep the soil from drying fast.

8. Enforce a pro-cosmic policy to ensure consumer conservation and reduction of residual waste and the maximum reuse and recycling of discarded resources. Implement the zero-use of plastic liners in room trash bins.

9. Put up ecology centers or materials recovery facilities (MRFs) to facilitate the sorting, reuse and recycling of discards.

10. Convert biodegradable discards from the kitchen and the yard into compost that can be used as organic fertilizer for the facility's yards, vegetable or fruit farms. Partner with the nearest barangays or farmers' cooperatives for the collection of food waste.

11. Don't burn or dump garden wastes, use fallen leaves and twigs as compost or mulch, recycle green clippings by turning them into the lawn to decompose.

Ink refiller takes cudgels for Mother Earth

AS THE WORLD HONORS EARTH DAY on April 22, people from all over the world will come together once more in a display of unity to arrest environmental woes such as global warming and climate change.

Businesses, for their part, will showcase new earth-friendly technologies and best practices as their share to the international effort to save Mother Earth.

One area where wastes can be significantly reduced is on printer cartridges which are used by close to a quarter of the world's population on a daily basis. According to estimates, some 12 million cartridges are used annually, with only some 5 percent being refilled because of fear of damaging their printers.

Scientific data reveals that it takes some 450 years for one cartridge to fully decompose.

"While most businesses and personal users wanted to see ways on cartridges to contribute to preserving the environment, they have no choice but to stay with original equipment because of the inefficiency of existing refilling systems," says Babylyn Bernos-Swinfield, master franchisee of Cartridge World.

Introduced to the Philippines last year, the Australia-based franchisee is a one-stop shop of inkjet, laser, fax and photocopier needs, which recycles cartridges using state-of-the-art and earth-friendly refilling technology.

Cartridge World has more than 1,300 franchisees in some 52 countries and continues to provide a full range of services to meet the printing needs of both consumers and business. It refills cartridges quickly and conveniently for about half the price of new products and remanufactures most types of toner cartridges.

In addition to refilling, it also sells remanufactured products and inkjet cartridges under its own brand to work with printers, with the same quality of a new one.

Swinfield said that while ink refilling has been practiced in the country for several years now, it has never reached its full potential because of the crude system being employed, which damages computer printers.

In its quarterly master franchisee conference in Singapore last February, the firm set its sight on Japan, China, Bahrain and Thailand, to expand its Asian market presence and contribute to the global recycling movement.

Swinfield said that locally, Cartridge World has been doing an awareness campaign on the need to refill printer and photocopier cartridges in select schools.

It has also partnered with Toni Lake Turtle Club (TLTC) in the creation of bobo sinking monuments to highlight the need to preserve the fragile ecosystem of Taal Lake in Batangas. One of the country's most important inland bodies of water, the lake is endangered with siltation and pollution due to the proliferation of fish cages using chemical feeds.

As part of its corporate citizenship, owners are looking at the possibility of harnessing more-based environmental clubs with their clients.

She said that under the slogan "Refill, not landfill," they are hopeful businesses and individuals will be encouraged to take part of the global efforts in reducing office-based wastes.

"While a more superior technology and branding, we want to take refilling a notch higher, while doing our humble share for Mother Earth," Swinfield said.

Cartridge World has six outlets located on Ayala Street, Dela Costa and Chino Roces Avenue Extension in Makati City; Capitol Road and Mona Boulevard in Pasig City; and Ilocos Road, Philippine City. For more information, log on to www.cartridgeworld.com.ph.

Soap-making talk set

WHAT CAN HOUSEHOLDS DO TO offset the rising prices of basic goods these days?

On the health and hygiene front, they can turn to subsistence to make their own sanitary products.

The Golden Treasure Skills and Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap-making at the College of Social Work and Community Development, Magsaysay Avenue corner Vinzons Street, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City on April 19, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are material sourcing and costing.

Participants will experience how to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, laundry soap, powder soap, herbal bath soap (papaya, kalamansi, cucumber, oatmeal, etc.), and glycerin (transparent bath soap).

Starter courses include making liquid bleach, fabric softener, tile and bowl cleaner, glass cleaner, air freshener, car shampoo, tire black and pressing starch coconut oil for soap.

For questions, please call 436-78-36, 413-6451-31 and 421-18-77.

Fraud-free virtual shopping at eLBC

VIRTUAL E-COMMERCE IS A SCARY jungle for shoppers, especially with predatory hackers ready in posses on any credit card information they can get their dirty hands on.

Credit card hacking and e-payment fraud is growing, according to a CyberSource Online Fraud Report, and online businesses lost a whopping $3.6 billion in 2007 alone. A significant percentage of fraud came from credit card information stolen through regular transactions made at restaurants, gasoline stations and specialty shops. Without a strong cyber line, Filipino online shoppers are also like at risk of being victimized by Internet culprits.

Safe online payment

This threat prompted eLBC Direct Inc. (eLBC) to partner with trust service providers VeriPayments and myEnrollign to ensure that it provides customers with top-line fraud protection of its online stores Express Regalo, DigiPrint, M-Express, Flowers Express and MyAfterall.com.

One of eLBC's partners against online fraud is VeriPayments, the payment gateway used by leading acquiring banks and merchants across Asia, whose "Fork Connect" interface allows eLBC customers to pay directly via the Internet through credit cards. The third-party provider also offers a full suite of management, accounting and customer support tools.

Online certification

What makes VeriPayments critical to eLBC's fight against e-payment fraud is their ability to monitor purchase transactions. "We address online fraud by providing an excellent profiling and monitoring system," says Simon Pikes, CEO of VeriPayments. "It provides 24/7 real-time transaction warnings that assist eLBC in determining the risk for accepting an order."

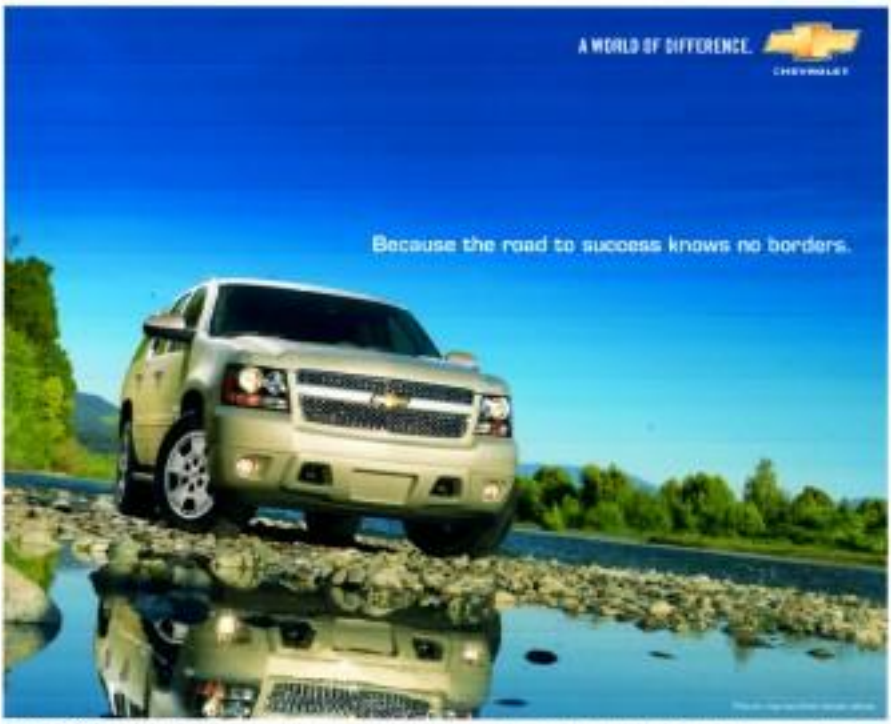
While VeriPayments handles payment monitoring for eLBC, myEnrollign, the local affiliate of global fraud solutions leader VeriSign, handles data integrity and server maintenance services for eLBC's online websites.

VeriSign's technology also ensures data infrastructure and provides digital certificates that allow eLBC customers or to whether a website is secure or not. VeriSign's digital certificates protect over 900,000 Web servers including those of Fortune 500 companies like Merrill Lynch, Oracle and eBay.

"With its Web-based transactions and online payment facility eLBC benefits greatly from our services," says Elaine Marie Ong, Industry Manager of myEnrollign. "Customers visiting eLBC websites can be assured that confidential confidential is safe from threats like hacking."

The world-class online security provided by myEnrollign's VeriSign and VeriPayments is in line with eLBC's mission: To provide a safe and convenience virtual shopping experience to its Filipino customers, most of which live overseas. eLBC is confident that their vigilance against e-payment fraud will translate to greater Filipino confidence in buying online gifts and products for their loved ones in the Philippines through Express Regalo or DigiPrint.

eLBC Direct Inc. is an LBC company formed to provide Filipinos here and abroad a way to purchase gifts online and send them to loved ones in the Philippines. For more information about its online store brands Express Regalo, DigiPrint, M-Express, Flowers Express and myAfterall.com, please call 812-3382, e-mail customerservice@expressregalo.com or visit their online websites at www.expressregalo.com, www.digiprint.com.ph, http://www.m-express.com.ph/, http://www.flowersexpress.com.ph/, http://www.myaterall.com.ph/.



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Globe Business

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE COUNTRY'S RETAIL sector has to come up with strategies to fully tap the tourism sector as a major market segment.

Jorge T. Mendiola, president of the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA) and SM Cebu president for operations, said that, during a meeting held in Cebu recently, the PRA also raised the need for the retail industry to implement measures to maximize the potential of the tourism market.

In an interview, Mendiola noted the success presented by Singapore and Hong Kong in attracting tourists by offering their goods on sale.

Touting his speech before PRA Cebu members, he also cited the Department of Tourism report showing that the tourist arrivals for January this year went up by 7.8 percent, from 270,000 the same month last year to 291,000.

The January tourist receipts also increased 28 percent to $394 million from $317 million in the same period last year, Mendiola added.

Makulay Shopping Spree

To tap into this market, he said, the PRA would work with the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp. (PCVC) in the implementation of the Makulay Shopping Spree project.

To run from June 2008 to December 2008, the project aims to stimulate more shopping among tourists by distributing Makulay Privilege Shopping cards, which would entitle them to discounts from participating retailers, restaurants and hotels/inns, Mendiola said.

However, Mendiola said that tourists go to Singapore and Hong Kong for shopping because of its wide variety of branded products that are famous worldwide, which the Philippines could not offer.

Mendiola, along with the other members of the PRA board, came to Cebu to attend the first general membership meeting of the PRA Cebu chapter.

Bernie Liu, PRA vice president for regional affairs, said the retail sector has to work with the DOT because retail and tourism sectors are interrelated.

Retail growth

As tourism grows, retailing would also grow, said Liu, who is the chief executive officer of the Golden 888, Inc., makers of Frankipan.

"We hope to be able to institutionalize something soon. Hopefully, we can make our own mark," he said in an interview.

Liu also disclosed that reports of Pinakapan to the Middle East and the opening of Pinakapan franchise outlets abroad has helped create awareness of the brand.

Meanwhile, Mendiola also urged the retail industry players to look at the business process outsourcing (BPO) sector as an emerging market.

He said the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) estimated that the BPO industry would employ about 1.1 million people in 2010.

"This development has opened new windows of opportunity for the different sectors involved in servicing this growing market," Mendiola said.

The emerging BPO sector has encouraged a growing number of retail and convenience stores, fast foods, restaurants, coffee and teashops, he said.

"With more money in their hands but little time to use it, the young market requires a new way of marketing and merchandising and all of us retailers will do well to look at this segment of the market with an entirely new appreciation of the possibilities they can offer," Mendiola said.

Think positive

He also told PRA Cebu members to think positive despite the many challenges the retail industry faces.

"Despite the present political crisis and the challenges specific to our industry, we should always remember that our industry is a resilient one. It rides high on a good economy and it can bounce back from a lethargic economy," Mendiola said.

He noted that the dollar condition is stable as reports in January 2008, reaching $1.1 billion, which was 19 percent higher than remittances in November and December last year.

"Though our OFW [overseas Filipino workers] remains the strong pillars, which dominated the value of their hard-earned dollar, the economy still rides on their remittances sent home; which, in turn, fuel consumption," Mendiola added.

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **Heritage disaster:** Ancient Cebu church burns down/C4

LIFESTYLE

Editor Thelma Bisnar-San Juan Editorial Editor Lito B. Zulueta

OBSESSIONS
PASSION FOR COLLECTING

Ramon Orlina's Beetles

By Lito B. Zulueta

By some stretch of the imagination, the sculptor metamorphoses the bug into a limo

1971 model 1300s, stretched in one metre and upgraded from 1600cc engine to a 1776cc dual carb.

FROM scales to caliper. The white Beetle on the left was stretched into a limousine. Orlina says he's restoring the silver and green Beetles.

SCULPTOR RAMON Orlina is not only into glass, he's also into Beetles.

When he's not crafting the marvels from breakable glass that he's world famous for, he's restoring tired and old Volkswagen Beetles, a hobby that may be incomprehensible to the fun-era generation but is really perfectly sound in vintage car collectors.

His collection of vintage Beetles fills his studio in Manila's old Hampshire sub-district of Balic-Balic, his mercurial hometown where he used to commute—or cheer his battered Beetle?—to the nearby University of Santo Tomas, where he took up Architecture.

The place has the looks and the dirt and blare typical of Hampshire. It's a regular downhome vintage manila barrio.

Part of Orlina's passion for Beetles is nostalgia.

"My first car was a 'Volkswagen Beetle,'" said the architect-visual artist.

He said he had been collecting Beetles partly out of sentimental reasons and partly to preserve parts for his restoration.

Stretched Beetle

His first restoration work is a stretched Beetle—yes, a stretched, like a limousine.

The reconstituted 1974 Volkswagen Beetle 1300s is one of the more notable entries in this year's spare-class car competition in the Texas Sport Show (2008, April 18-20, at the SM Megamall).

Orlina said his approach was not to restore the Beetle to its original condition but to create the only "Limousine Bug" in the world.

Orlina explained the car was cut in half and stretched by more than one metre. Two additional doors were incorporated into the lines for rear passenger entry. Also installed was a glass partition door behind the driver and front passenger seats "should there be a need for more privacy," the artist said.

The limo Beetle is painted white with leather-armored beige interiors. The top celebrates its four persons because of two hood seats facing each other.

Aside from the dual air-conditioning system, another amenity is a Philips DVD player hooked up to an all-Bluetooth surround-sound system. The 13-inch monitor is hidden behind the backrest of the hood's seat facing the rear seats. The hood can be folded to reveal the monitor.

To meet and every-blue-moon added load, the car's chassis has been stiffened with a ladder-type box frame and the four-type 4 cylinder engine bored to 1800cc for more horsepower.

Restoration as art

Orlina said he had always admired vintage cars. "I had an English sports car, a fixed-top, soft-top convertible Sunbeam Alpine, similar to what James Bond used in the movie 'Dr. No,'" he said.

But Orlina said he did not want to be called a restorer.

"I'm a step I am different from the conventional restorer as I like to add a little something different, like making the car a limousine and adding a print of my signature green glass on the car," he said.

In fact, his interest in cars was sparked by his participation in the BMW Art Cars exhibitions last year where he painted an art work on the body of a miniature.

"Certainly restoring vintage cars is a form of art," Orlina said, referring to artists who have recast cars into works of art, such as Andy Warhol, Frank Stella, Alexander Calder and Robert Rauschenberg.

But restoring vintage cars and tweaking them into works of art requires a room of skilled craftsmen and consultants, "in this case all Beetle enthusiasts who form a tech community," Orlina said.

"There is no envy but a kind of respect and mutual admiration, and willingness to help each other," the artist added. "I learned a great deal from reading books, asking from the specialists and spending to my little collection and enthusiasm. I was fortunate to have such a team who encouraged me and also gave their best effort to make this first of a kind here bug in the Philippines."

"The whole exercise has been thrilling and fulfilling," the artist added, "even though it involved searching hard for the spare parts and overcoming engineering challenges."

The thrill has been infectious as Ruz Orlina wants to widen his collection and restoration.

She said her respect involving the TV show "Pimp My Ride."

"The makeover jobs are amazing and give me ideas," Orlina said. "I am contemplating on stretching a Volkswagen Kombi for Lay Ann (the artist's Malaysian wife) is putting her foot down, haha."

SCULPTOR proudly poses with his "new" artwork in the vintage Legenda residence in Ang-Dulao compound.

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A museum for new design

Text by Gilden Cadiz
Photos by Jess Perez

A NEW LANDMARK STRUCTURE IN Manila at the De La Salle College of Saint Benilde School of Design and Arts building along E Ocampo St. (formerly 9th Ave.), Malate.

Inside the 14-story steel-and-glass tower are enormous, all-white spaces devoid of clutter and flooded by daylight and fresh air—a design aesthetic meant to promote out-of-the-box thinking among the school's 2,500 students.

On the ground floor of the building is an even more striking feature: a museum.

Perhaps the first of its kind in the country, the Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD) sits on a huge space inside the school, with 20-ft ceilings, concrete walls and glass windows that allow for maximum natural light.

"The huge space gives greater flexibility in the type of shows we want to mount," says architect Jose Gerardo L.V. Torres, dean of the School of Design and Arts. "You can put a helicopter or even a pond in there."

MUSH Layag installation, a homage to bamboo as the breakthrough material for the designer-stylist's monument furniture creations

Inaugural exhibit

Ongoing until September is MCAD's inaugural exhibit featuring recent works by 11 Filipino artists, all of them with at least three decades of practice in their craft. The show, which seeks to cast the "artists of the contemporary" to current by Sharon Parcia Flores.

The featured artists are Jaume Arbeloa (agricultural engineer), Joey Hassarina (fruit designer and builder), Budji Layag (designer/stylist of domestic environments), Globulido del Mundo Jr. (jet-printer/artist and filmmaker), Neal Oshima (photographer), Jim Paredes (song-writer and performer), Jorge Pineda (playwright, novelist and painter), Judy Freya Rhoyan (conceptual artist), Jesus Soliz (costumier), Rizzelle de Gregria (poet), and Ramon Villegas (jewelry designer and antique dealer).

"We are not a fine arts school, but a design school," says Torres. "We don't have painting, sculpture, printmaking and the like. What we have are 12 bachelor's degree programs on the industrial arts—music production, animation, digital filmmaking, photography, fashion design, multimedia arts, etc.

"So the museum, which is embedded in the school, is designed to augment the learning programs of our students. The exhibit aims to show them examples of artists who have developed their craft through the originality of their ideas, and whose works illustrate contemporary modes, and also social impact. It's a show of ideas, concepts and explorations."

ARCHITECT Jose Gerardo L.V. Torres, dean of the De la Salle-College of Saint Benilde School of Design and Arts

11 Filipino artists from various design fields participate in the inaugural show of Saint Benilde's Museum of Contemporary Art and Design

INNER Sorry's black-and-yellow creation—a spidery tribute to Jackson Pollock

AGRICULTURAL engineer Jaume Arbeloa's raccoon or guanxerito, an award-winning anti-soil erosion invention

The most physically imposing of the artists' installations is easily Layag's, found at the second level of the museum. As a homage to bamboo, the original material for his breakthrough furniture creations, Layag disassembled a boho and installed a sprawling canopy of bamboo poles around a concrete column.

Under this canopy are scattered samples of his world-renowned furniture designs. The sofas, tables and chairs now are pint-size—but still made to look like bamboo.

Fashion photographer Oshima mixes his profession-enriched and provides a subtly commentary on politics and mortality with his stark images of the clothes of dead or missing people.

The late Jaime Zoppini's haunting Tagalog is no exhibit, as are snapshots of the late-ing Jesus Bonpal' wardrobe, as well as the robes of Burmese monks involved in the brutal Burmese crackdowns in 1988.

Soliz's installation of a yellow and black grave with threads spraying out in all directions is a paean to Jackson Pollock, while jewelry designer Villegas displays newly exalted jewelry pieces derived from antique or vintage designs—an illustration of the past informing the present.

Novelist and painter Pineda's corner has paintings of MRT Cubao Station, the milieu of his novels, as well as erotic portraits of SY characters from his Gilda Cafe crime-novel found up in a black-draped nomad.

Dr. Eugene Evasco's assemblages, meanwhile, fully illustrated the versatility of the museum's physical and technological attributes. His poems, printed on tape, run the length of the floor, are projected on the white walls, and blow out from the speakers, recited by the poet himself.

Active space

"Budji asked for walls painted gray, and the bamboo can sit up against the colonnade. He said, go ahead," says Torres. "This exhibit is interchangeable to show what the space can do. It's all owners, so artists can really do anything here."

"We don't want a museum that's hushed like a cathedral," he adds. "We want action, collaborations, explorations, a space that provokes our students to think out of the box. Of our 350 faculty members, 90 percent are active industry practitioners. So there's that dynamic straight from their projects to the classrooms. What's unique about this museum is that it's a partnership between it and the school of design and art. We intend to keep that dynamic for years to come."

Torres says plans for MCAD after the inaugural exhibit closes in September include multimedia shows and exhibits that can be shown online or synchronously in other countries using available technology.

"We want to create shows that respond and help develop our student artists. We want to produce not just draftsmen, or fine-wallpaper experts, but a school of thinkers, like the artists we're featuring in the exhibit," he says.

"Whether they're inspired by poetry, music, fashion or the design of boats, what's important is that the students learn to go beyond the surface and dive deeper, says Torres.

"They have to ask questions, debate, think. Only then can they design original works that respond to contemporary times, that become part of society while alongside being the profession forward."

The Museum of Contemporary Art and Design is open 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays to Saturdays, and is open to events like product launchings and music concerts. Entrance is free. True to the museum's interactive atmosphere, "visitors can sketch, take photos, do anything inside as long as nothing is destroyed," says Torres.

PORTRAITS by player Igot and painter Tony Perez depicting dead characters from his stories, lined up inside a black makeshift tunnel

Multimedia 'Visions' at E

"IN CHAOS, in Disarray," by Jerry Samson

E GALERIE PHILIPPINES "Visions," an exhibit of digital paintings and illustrations printed on canvas by up-and-coming artists from the Asian Pacific College School of Multimedia Arts (APC-SOMMA).

The show consists of twenty student- and traditional tools in depicting surrealist digital interpretation on the genesis and fallout of globalized modernity set against the backdrop of contemporary everyday life.

"Visions" signals the debut of a promising crop of young talents that includes Carlo Villa Cruz, Vincent Noel Moreno, Jerry Ryan Samson, Jaybert Co, John Michael Ibon and Ma. Bernadette.

The show runs until April 12. E Galerie is at 2/F Abaya at Serendra, across Market! Market!, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Call 9133098 for more information.

"LIKE A FISH That You Want for Swimming," by Carlo Cruz, and "The Puppet and the Puppeteer," by Jaybert Co

VISUAL ARTS

Langenegger at Magnet

Roman Langenegger's "Post Counsel" takes its metaphor from basketball to interrogate the idea of continuity by destruction as exemplified by American basketball star Magic Johnson, who continued the 80's-era renaissance of a promiscuous lifestyle. Johnson is able to evade moral indictment by turning himself into a minstrel of "safe sex." The works, done in the manner of Guillaumette icon paintings, offer alternative readings of stories and parables from the Bible. The show runs at Magnet (330 Aguirre Bldg., Ballquirant Ave., Loyola Heights, QC) April 19-May 3. Call 9260181.

"TAKING Religion in the House of Excellence"

Velasco Guiao at Blue Ridge

Lety Velasco Guiao will mount her 5th solo show in her residence, 7 Tramontana Drive, Blue Ridge B, QC, May 1-31. Her subjects are flowers, landscapes and still life. The artist captures these in oil and canvas. Call 6471122.

Gonotiva at CCP

Jesus Alfaro Gonotiva holds his lead from to, "Lenten Lords," April 23-May 25 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Pandyo Virginia Galleria. The artist's expressionism is a direct offshoot of New Objectivism, with its bitter humor and biting satirical political criticism. Call 8321703.

Samson at Kaida

Jameson Samson opens his latest exhibit, "Says," April 23 at Kaida Gallery, 3/F, BPO Bldg., Ramirez Road, SC. Samson explores social issues and ties to translate sociological perspectives through expressionistic canvases. Call 3630321 or 09174507207 or e-mail bitsatsa.ats@rocketmail.com.

San Pascual at Finale

Departing from his trademark style of intense colors and wildly expressive faces in Pepe San Pascual's "Primavera," on view at Finale Art Fils (441 LaC Center, Pasay Road cor. Makati Ave., Makati). The artist uses blue and white as main hues, a reminiscent of the ceramics from Ming dynasty China and as a way where surfaces become canvas. Featuring Lola's of images from Buddhism, the artist's "Ina" is a total expression of tribal flowers, birds and moonlight, with the figure seemingly enraptured with music in meditation. "Primavera" runs until April 16. Call 8152150 or M 25056 or mail www.finaleartfils.com.

"KWAN YU"

Art classes for kids at Quastrocento

Artist Vincent Padilla will conduct the Galeria Quastrocento-Fabonan's first summer art workshop for kids 7 years old and above. It will be held April 8-24, every Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m.-12 noon. Padilla runs a Filipino finalist in the Asean Art Awards. Call 9103046, 5115908.

Positibare art workshop

The Positibare art workshop by painter E.R. Tapia is accepting students of all ages who wish to learn basic drawing and painting. Classes will be held at Makati Cinema Square Terrace, Chino Roces Ave., Makati; Robinsons, Ilar Crescent Mall Art Gallery, Macapagal Blvd., Pasay; Honda Cars Pasig, Rodriguez St., Libis, QC; Wallet Mart, Arnaiz and Chino Roces Ave., Makati. Call M 12483, 0907-8622088.

Summer art camps

The ArtistPost Play and Party Centers will hold its summer art camps April 21-May 23, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., at ArtistPost, Robinsons Mall, Pasay; Fernwork, Fernbrey Verde, Pasig; and Westgate Center, Alabang.

The Summer Art Camp will be conducted by artist and instructor Cyd Fabulario of Fabulaprinting Makers and the Artists Association of the Philippines.

Registration ongoing. Log on to www.artistpost.ph or call 3861208 or 7363394 (Pasig area) 6004200 (Pasay and Alabang).

AMONG the classical singers were (seen here) Alberto Gandon and baritone Leo Cuyugan, sopranos Camille Lopez, Jennifer Uy, Lora Mirasol and Tina Pedroche

Painter Grace Kalaw-Katigbak opens the Kalaw-Katigbak Art Center in Quezon City

GINNY Hoang, Grace Kalaw-Katigbak, Tina Madrigal, Lolo Consuelo and Jaime Laya

CONDUCTOR Antonio Molina, tenor Glen Grande, flutist Ray Sicat

TWEA Pelaez: David Katigbak and Diana Arana

Concert-exhibit under the stars inaugurates new home for the arts

By Arnulo Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

THE ELEGANT TWO-STORY residence along the corner of 11th Street and 30th Broadway in New Manila had seen better days. For the mother had passed on, and her children had settled down elsewhere in the metropolis. The Kalaw-Katigbak house, in fact, was due to be torn down to give way to "a project."

Grace Kalaw-Katigbak and her brothers, however, remembered the good times they shared in this place with their mother, Evelina Kalaw Pinto, an operatic soprano. (Evelina had two other equally distinguished sisters-Portia Kalaw-Ledesma, who was into painting, and Maria Kalaw-

ONE of four monumental horses created by sculptor Ehendi Restiero Katigbak

Katigbak, who was into writing.)

And so the dutiful daughter decided not to demolish the structure but to transform it instead into an art gallery where indoor exhibitions and outdoor events could be held. The place, dedicated to the memory of Evelina, was cleaned up and given a fresh coat of white paint; the surrounding pool became well-maintained, and the lovely garden spruced up and maintained.

A good reason for a garden soiree on a concert under the stars.

Which is exactly what happened one recent evening—in a exhibition filled the sky—when Grace announced the opening of the Kalaw-Katigbak Art Center, its inaugural exhibit and the attendant outdoor activity, "A Night at the Opera."

Unveiled in the garden where four monumental horses created by Grace's son, sculptor Ehendi Restiero Katigbak. Among those who did the unveiling was soprano-librettist Fides Cuyugan Asensio, who informed the audience that the man, speaking on a new opera songbook on ABS.

Program host Kalaw-Katigbak, who has many anecdotes about her mother and her contemporaries, recalled that her mother once wanted to play "Tosca," but her tutor, Jovita Fuentes, no less, refused. "I will pay for the production," Evelina threatened. Whereupon the great Filipina concert diva agreed.

"In one of the rehearsals," Kalaw-Katigbak said, "the Filipino was keeping time and her foot was so emphatic she dug her heel through the wooden floor of my home in San Juan!"

One of the performers that evening was her brother, Teodoro (Doy) Katigbak, who once played Hamlet in a Rolando Tinio production. He urged with Steven Patrick Mi Ultimo Adios (My Last Farewell), but the longest was listened because it was in English translation (by Nick Joaquin).

The moonlight concert featured the Manila Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Jaime Molina with a lineup of promising as well as established singers—tenor Juan Alberto Gandon and baritone Leo Cuyugan, sopranos Camille Lopez, Jennifer Uy, Lora Mirasol and Tina Pedroche.

The familiar, beloved arias and duets from Mozart, Puccini and Gounod unfolded, and one was transported. Inclement's appreciation of the music was enhanced by the free-flowing red wine...

The concert was capped by two of the greatest songs, absolutely: Manuel Buenafe and Jose Pedro's "Ay Tigre, ay Dayon," with Gemino "Gemmo" Abad's Kumalsel" providing a funny finale for the ensemble.

We have a new home for the arts in Quezon City, once the Cubao area. Viva!

Shifting reality in Lindslee's art

By Dexey C. Sibala
Contributor

IN HIS QUEST FOR AESTHETIC meaning, Lindsee Lindslee[1] constantly juxtaposes whether abstract art is the end to itself, defined and bereft of figurative elements on a flattened canvas, or is it an individual's medium open to a more concrete representation?

In his current show of paintings and installations with the thematic title "Figurative/Abstract" until May 3, "The Drowning Room, Mezzanine Bldg., 1307 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City, 8472027, 8070990, the artist challenges the normative concept of abstract art or not-so-literal.

In the "Make-up Café" installation, for example, Lindslee installed a transformed restaurant booth here, in the right side of the love is no intended view, "Abstract," and on the left, "Portraits." The women in an elegant posture, is in a knitted pink apron as though it's about to cook her lover the audience.

Tinged with satire and sarcasm, the sculptural installation signifies the existential reality of man and his society. Lindslee drawn the divider side of a human psyche torn between the positive or negative of emotion and personality.

The haunting imagery symbolizes the two opposing sides of man's perception of reality. He can either be fearful and suspicious of reality, or desperate to believe in something sublime, which is beyond the rational comprehension of man's consciousness.

Lindslee's abstract painting "Tethering Gravity" has varying hues of black, white and gray at the upper left of the canvas is an undefined state of existence like adjacent to a realistic figure of man (self-portrait). The textures and colors of the canvas are arbitrarily arranged—evidently the characteristics of abstraction.

What makes the artwork appetizing and in sense of undefined forms and colors is the depiction of a realistic figure. Otherwise, without the figurative aspect of the composition, the canvas is blank and lonely.

Obviously the artist intentionally included the figurative element to create pictorial tension. The title "Defining Gravity" literally creates a gravitational aspect within the composition and creates the perspective of the viewers.

The artist, subsequently, redefines and introduces new dimensions in abstraction.

"DEFINING Gravity"

Taxidermy artist

As an abstract and taxidermy artist, Lindslee skillfully concocts a most challenging scenario in the art by integrating the two aesthetic realities into his works.

The unique use of traditional elements as Lindslee's art is admirably born out of the desire to explore and elevate his artistic vision a more concrete exposition of reality, a reality the artist wishes to reveal, whether it is beautiful or ugly.

In "Ugly Painting" an installation of a stuffed duck sitting on a bench painted with the figure of Jesus Christ (Sacred Heart), the picture is painted on one side of the bench. Below the bench is a huge white egg, five times larger than the life-size duck.

The symbolism of duck, giant egg and religious icon elicits a haunting reality. The poignant imagery signifies universal, religious truth, or perhaps the complacency of man's religious faith, still being falsified, as shown by the figure of egg. Second, the work itself becomes an icon of complacency in creating a more subtle aesthetics.

Cebu colonial

From page B4

Section."

So it seems that the expat community. The lessons to be learned are obvious.

If you like third fire in Ozlob church in 60 years.

The first happened in 1942 when guerrillas burned it down during World War II because it was believed Japanese were hiding inside the structure. From that fire, only cornerstone walls and columns survived.

In 1950, another fire of unknown origin gutted the entire complex, leaving only the masonry walls, inside St. Pedro Calungsod in his book "Angels in Stone."

Rehabilitation rebuilt the convent in 1977 and completed restoration of the church in 1980, following plans earlier prepared by Bishop Jaime Cinense Maximino, who also oversaw the façade and belfry of the Cebu Metropolitan Cathedral, the former Bishop's Palace next to the cathedral, and the new iconic Magellan's Cross kiosk that is a prime Cebu tourist destination.

The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, ordained in a glass case at the center of the altar, survived the fire, but other religious artifacts and church records were lost.

Now the question for Ozlob residents is how to rebuild their church.

There is need for documentation, a full record of architectural plans and photographs as well as a catalog of all church treasures to guide any future restorations or conservation.

Another pressing matter is disaster preparedness. This means the town should have fire trucks that work and fire drills to teach local residents how to cope with fire and other disasters.

The issues for adequate disaster control is not on government authorities alone. The Catholic hierarchy, as the owner of church, should institute its own preventive policies and measures as well.

What is said now is learn that an urgent disaster control is very essential to heritage conservation now that Ozlob has been lost to the flames!

E-mail the author at pride.place@gmail.com

Surrealism of the everyday

"HINIRING" II

By Constantine C. Bajare

SALVADOR "BUDDY" CHING CAN quite effortlessly capture the everyday by representing it as something rich and strange. By cutting found objects and mundane items and merging them to create disorienting compositions, he can effortlessly transform the real into the surreal, thus enhancing reality.

The two recently demonstrated in his show "Kabalistiya," 27 pieces in mixed media on fabric, in The Big & Small Art Co. at the Arnaiz, L/4, Brgy. A. Del Rosario, Mandaluyong City.

These are illustrations in acrylic and graphite-stenciled canvas and incidentally colored on pieced fabric then embellished with various objects in mixed media. While the embellishment are multicolored and often brilliant, the dense human figures are clearly white and gray, drawing the viewer's eye to full attention.

The show's title refers to the ridiculous which, the exhibition note says, "is a description of everyday life, showing the passage of time that seems to be neglected in our constant struggle to cope with life and the fulfillment of our needs."

Explains the note: "In the these simple objects that we see in our surroundings represent real life and its complexities and the like—work deadline, bill payments, taking care of relationships, and other mundane qualities of our daily existence. Growing in an endless cycle from one sequence to the next."

"Idealyad" is a series of 21 small pieces representing the days of the month and each day's contents, hence differentiated by flooding objects we encounter every day.

"Binabing" 1-2 are signified by figures from classical art, the Mother and Son, an eternal human relationship seen by the artist as repeatful amid clouds, trees and memories.

The diptych "Kanya-Kanya" depicts a couple whose relationship has obviously been ravaged by the passage of time and age.

"Hiligasnan" is patently religious in tone and composition. The images: a Jesus religious art—the Crucified Christ's twisted lower limbs, the crown of thorns, the nails, all-blood mixed white fluffy clouds. The theme, of course, is man's weaknesses and reversed salvation, an everyday occurrence than no one seems to notice.

"Buya," the biggest piece at 8 ft. x 4 ft., is a rather austere image of a fully grown widow bare to bare with his corpse...innocuous objects in the list such as plastic toys of chicky, fish, bird, poppy, apple, evening rose, necklace, chalk.

A multi-awarded painter, sculptor, installation and performance artist, Ching is a facilitator of the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Artists for the People program.

The exhibition note reveals: it is here his travels to various regions of the country while conducting workshops and presiding as therapy to those who have experienced natural disasters and armed conflict, that he has established "his broad perspective that leads him to awareness of the underlying principles of everyday life transcending the flaws of culturally diverse individuals, referencing them against his personal strengths and ideals as an artist."

This is closely manifested in this show. He can see how his fleeting objects have become every person's changing thoughts.

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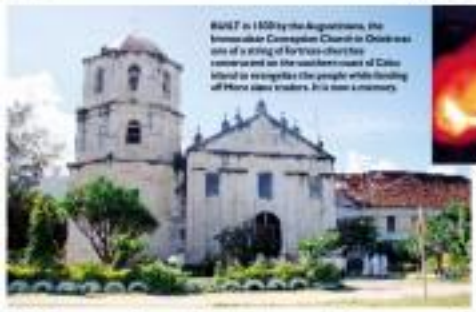
BUILT in 1830 by the Augustinians, the Immaculate Conception Church in Oslob was one of a string of fortress-churches constructed on the southern coast of Cebu island to evangelize the people while fending off Moro slave traders. It is now a treasury.

OSLOB church burning

NOT much of the church shell remains after the fire.

Church of Oslob was just 50 meters away from the fire station that had no working fire truck. Incident shows risks faced by heritage structures

Cebu colonial church burns down on Fire-Prevention Month

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR Monuments and Sites (Icomos) celebrates April 18 as International Day for Monuments and Sites, a day when the Icomos national committees put up a global celebration highlighting monuments and sites.

Passed during the Unesco general conference in 1983, the special day is an opportunity to raise public awareness about the diverse heritage existing in the world today, its vulnerability, and the efforts being done to protect and conserve it.

This year's theme, "Religious Heritage and Sacred Places," is very appropriate to the Philippines where the majority of the population associates themselves strongly with religious monuments, particularly the string of Spanish colonial churches that encircles most of the islands of the archipelago.

Very significant to the theme is the recent destruction of the Spanish colonial church and convento in Oslob, Cebu, which was gutted down by fire on March 27, a sad lesson on the vulnerability of religious heritage.

The church dedicated to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception is the coastal town of Oslob (117 km south of Cebu City) is one of the massive coral-stone church fortresses constructed by the Augustinian Fray Julian Bermejo to protect the southern coastline of Cebu from Moro pirate raids commonplace at that time. The cornerstone of the church dated its construction in 1830.

The fire, attributed to faulty electrical wiring, started at 1:45 a.m. in the room of Fr. Valentino Gesalta, the parish priest.

Although some of the original church walls survived, the fire reduced most of the church into rubble and completely demolished the convento.

As of last week, the local fire marshal has not released his findings as the rubble can be removed or disturbed.

When inspected by conservation architect members of Icomos Philippines, surviving stone walls appeared to have severe cracks caused by the heat, requiring a thorough structural investigation to determine if the Icomos church ruins can still be saved.

"The belfry is unscathed," confirms a report by the Cebu Archdiocesan Commission for Church Heritage. "It [belfry] has the original wooden interior structure dating from the latter part of the 19th century and the 11 bells [the most that have been found in a single Spanish-period bellcotes] remain. The floor boards and stair railings are unscathed."

The three-story belfry was originally built in 1850 by Augustinian Fr. Apolinar Alvarez.

The disaster has brought together an unprecedented number of church heritage authorities, conservation specialists from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and the Cebu provincial government.

Very much involved in the Ramon Aboitiz Foundation, which has been actively working in the southern Cebu municipalities in community building and heritage-tourism programs.

The various agencies are working with the parish priest and the Oslob congregation to determine the future of their church.

No preventive measures

What about prevention measures that could have saved the church from total devastation?

The fire could have been contained because the church is located about 50 meters from the fire station. However, the Oslob fire marshal reported to the Cebu Daily News "They could not respond because their fire trucks were defective."

"The fire trucks from nearby towns of Santander, Dalaguete, Argao and Sibonga arrived past 2 a.m. but the fire had already engulfed the church and convent," the report added.

"The fire department in Bohol town [sent] and most prominent to Oslob failed to send fire trucks because those were also de-

OSLO C2

LIFESTYLE

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"EN LA PUERTA de la Luna," Painting that fools the eye

Sunshine Plaza's watercolor works using coffee as main medium get special treatment in 'Believe It or Not' comic strip and top-rating American TV program

Pinoy 'coffee artist' featured in 'Martha Stewart,' 'Ripley's'

WHEN SUNSHINE PLAZA inaugurated her first exhibit at the Casino Español in Manila recently, her medium and inspiration was coffee, no less.

"When the entire household was mixing coffee with sugar in a cup of warm water and a few spoonfuls of creamer, I was mixing fine coffee grain with room-temperature water with a paintbrush," she said.

So far, Plaza is the only artist who has made coffee her exclusive medium.

Plaza's "Ninfa of Staircase" was featured in "Art That Fools the Eye," a special segment on the "Martha Stewart Show's" April Fools Day show in the US.

For the show, Tim O'Brien, Ripley's vice president for publishing and communications, brought five different art pieces that "fool the eye" from Ripley's Museum.

The museum has recently bought two of Plaza's coffee paintings and has scheduled to set the paintings on exhibit in Korea and Mexico sometime next month.

Edward Meyer, VP for exhibits and archives, said Plaza's artform had caught the eye of Ripley's because of its uniqueness.

Unbelievable

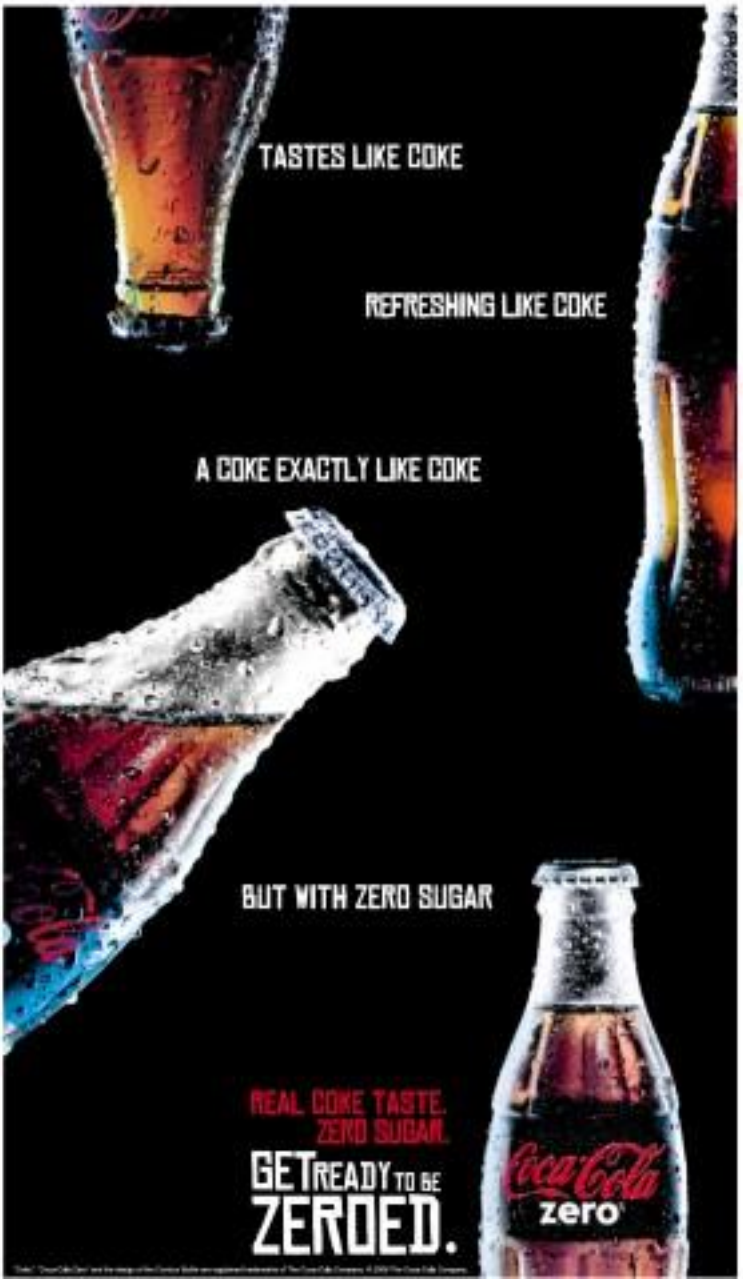
"Her work is not only beautiful, but the medium is unbelievable. We know of no one at this time anywhere in the world has handsome value paints with coffee grounds. Her work is definitely unbelievable, which is exactly what we are looking for. Well, the 'paint' isn't paint, but is coffee," Meyer said.

Aside from being unique, Meyer said her works were lyrical and romantic: "The works are reminiscent of animation of the 1940s. They remind me of Disney as his best: Pinocchio, Sleeping Beauty, Snow White ... Her ebon ladies are light years more sensual than Tinker Bell, though ... They definitely appeal to a sense of genteel womanliness."

Plaza started painting using instant coffee as an experiment some eight years ago.

PAGE D2

SUNSHINE Plaza with "First Fish," a tribute to coffee artist-she uses as medium



FULLHOUSE — BY STEPH BRAVO

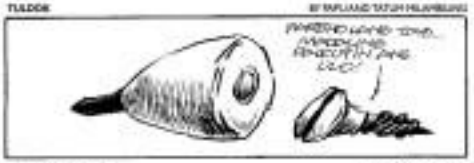
A. LIPIN — BY JOEL ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH. JUNIOR

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PAUL LUVAS

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

TULDOK — BY RAFLIANO TATOY HILARIO JUNIO



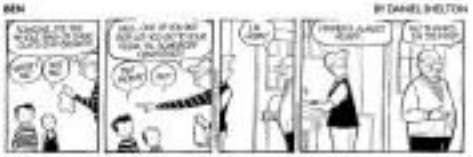
BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

ATOMIC AND WEBOY — BY LYRA GARCIA LANZ

LOVEMONTE — BY ELIZABETH CHONGUILO

KIKO MACHINE — BY MANOL ABRERA

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

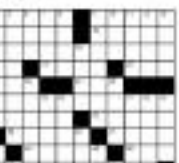


DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1. Subject of protest
4. "Whatever's clear"
8. Antigen, antigen-ess
14. Part of rock
15. Florida city
16. Kenya's territory
17. Ode
20. Aardvark's prey
21. Deadly fighter's stance
22. Gender
23. Gasoline
24. Go running again
27. Oar
28. Cross
29. Tent
30. Crowd type
31. Longfellow's bell tower
34. Has allowed
41. Take
42. Work spoon-given
44. ___ Law violators
46. Nanotechnology, scientist
47. Oar
50. Lanolin
51. Adhesive
52. "Rosie" composer Brahms
55. High-school
56. Order for solo-on-one combat
60. Sea
61. Lawrence, Thailand
64. It's quoted
65. Pt.'s doctor's title
66. Service weapon
67. Tee Moorish King
68. Relative by way

DOWN
1. Unlifted work
2. Monthly payment
3. Samuel Johnson, for one
4. Oil or tanger coffee organization
5. Host Barbara Walters
6. "Casablanca" pianist
7. Persian Kingdom
8. Hi-Yo ... Silver
9. Insignificant
10. Mind, philosophy
11. Prevents cash a case
12. Rose-seeding
13. Big name in dog pillows
18. Martini, Brian
19. Magnitude
24. Sentence
25. Greek letters
26. Sun ... Eat
27. Tee Organization
31. Two-lined
32. Crossings, uncommon point
33. Two-lined
35. Crossings, uncommon Greek kids
36. Stomachs
37. Ancient Greek
38. Try to agree
39. Editorials
40. Family members
42. Big commanders
43. Of ___ consideration
45. Modern capital of Iran
48. Modern name, confusion
49. Mexican volcano
52. Total situation
53. Bible-ing rejected
54. Blast zone
57. Sci-fi comic
58. Am. arm or so say
59. ___ Lovato, CA
62. Bingo-bonus
63. Mexican, sing.

Answer to Saturday's Puzzle Solved



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a strong respect for history and tradition. Although you're a traditionalist, you're also a visionary. It's a struggle for you to fit into society, which is basically what you want to do. You value the security of family. When you need to, you're responsible, conservative. Talk coach. You are also intuitive, well-read, with new possibilities and unexpected opportunities. You enjoy your family.

Celebrities born today include Julia Stiles, actress; Sarah Michelle Gellar, actress; Adrien Brody, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19). You need to be more patient and relaxed today. You make the reading you utilize sensitive and aware of new things around you that you're really unsure and tense. (Short)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20). Trust your instincts today. You're in a very positive way. The other is something like that.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20). Conversations with others are very ... gossip, ... comments and personalities. People are very caring today.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22). Make no important decisions, agreements, and plans today. Be very wary that you're not being taken advantage of. Be eager to express yourself. (Don't think you can control as with egg and your face.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22). You have a powerful desire for ... something related to ... Be careful not to ... Be ... Be ... Be

PLATA'S coffee art in "Ripley's Believe It or Not!"

"DRAMA" and "Fairy of Sorrow"

Pinoy 'coffee artist'

From page D1

To date, she has amassed quite a collection. Coffee painting is also her commitment to share the visual arts with everyone.

"I first used using Nescafé Classic and I was very happy with the result. It's very resilient, eco-friendly and, as a bonus, has an unmistakable aroma. So from then on, I was hooked with it," Plata said.

Plata had worked with oil at first.

But it was a visit to the Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum when it came to Manila years ago that got her interested in the use of coffee.

"TATTOO"

Included in the exhibit was a 19th-century artist who signed his name using coffee," Plata said. "I realized that the signature had managed to survive more than a century and figured I could try it as a medium to try own craft."

Plata's paintings capture myths. Her exhibit was supported by Nescafé, which was celebrating its 70th anniversary.

The exhibit was graced by Nestlé Philippines' business executive manager for coffee, Bruno Oberhofer.

"Nescafé's 70th year celebrations also highlight coffee beyond being a beverage of choice among countless Filipinos," Oberhofer said. "In fact, Nescafé has been working with people known for their crafts. We work with people who make jewelry, glass sculptures and even fashion."

Coffee in varied settings and classes is further highlighted in the recently launched coffee-table book "Kapihan: A Celebration of Coffee in the Philippines."

In the book, Pedro-based Filipino food artist Heny "Pook" Sy-Quia explores the many possibilities of coffee.

Meanwhile, Plata's works may be viewed on her website named "Kapeng Mahiwaga ng Isang Ilonggo" at http://ilonggo.wordpress.com. To see "Mind he Invasive Above's" feature on Plata, click on the "Updates" tab of Plata's website.

Cavite confab on literature

SAN SEBASTIAN COLLEGE RECOLETOS de Cavite (SSCR) hosts the 2nd Cavite National Conference in Literature, April 25-26, in the college auditorium.

Organized by San Sebastian along with Lilangan ng Literatura ng Pilipinas and Cavite Young Writers Association, Inc. (CYWA), the conference will cover Commission on Higher Education and Department of Education updates on literature curriculum, teaching techniques, creative story telling, poetry and prose readings. Local literature will also be given emphasis.

Lecturers include Emmanuel F. Calairo, dean of College of Arts & Sciences, De la Salle University-Dasmariñas; Wenceslao R. Jose, UP Graduate School professor; Jimmuel Naval, UP professor and Palanca poet; Ferdinand Lopez and Elvira Castro from the Department of Philosophy and Humanities of the University of Santo Tomas; Rebecca awardee Ilen Anella, junior fellow of UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies; Beverly Ily, president of the Lira poets group; Dante Ferdinand of SSC-R; and Reinald Velez, president of CYWA; and creative reading consultant Melody Ramonera.

Conference chair is ing Tagalog Reinaniel Elvira Abong, graduate school professor of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and University of Perpetual Help System Dalta.

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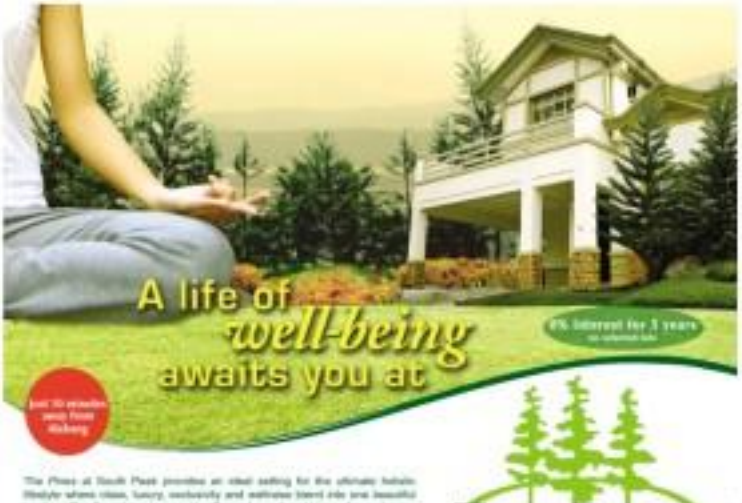
ROBBY TALONG EXHIBIT IN NEW YORK

US-based painter Bobby Talong is exhibiting his works at the Philippine Center in New York. Titled "Doorway on Canvas (Scapes et al.)," the exhibit features Talong's portraits and landscapes. He calls the show a conversation of mixed media. Talong is the founding chairman of the Associated Liaison of Fine Artists Unlimited and a member of the Hudson Artists of New Jersey.



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MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER E1

LIFESTYLE

La Gerodias triumphs in 'Turandot' in Vienna

By Pablo A. Tariman

SOPRANO Rachelle Gerodias made her triumphant European debut as Liu in Puccini's "Turandot" at the Volksoper Wien in Austria and got a round of bravos and a well-deserved ovation Wednesday last week.

The Filipina soprano got an inkling the was accepted when the audience clapped during her

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HYUNDAI

La Gerodias triumphs in 'Turandot' in Vienna

Front page E1

first aria, which didn't happen with the other Lia.

"I wouldn't believe it was actually happening in Vienna at the Volksoper!" the soprano told the long press.

The opening at the Volksoper Wien, with 1,400 seating capacity, had a full house, and after the performance Gerodias was greeted by her new fans waiting for her autograph.

"I felt like Ana Netrebko," said the soprano, who was pleasantly surprised when one of the autograph seekers told her she was his favorite in the production.

"It was an amazing experience," she continued. "It's so good I was able to represent our country until here in Vienna."

The "Turandot" venue is Vienna's largest theater for opera, musical and dance. In this latest season, Volksoper Wien has 291 performances, 21 new productions with over 150 singers, 93 orchestra musicians, 64 choir singers and countless dancers.

How did Rachelle find the theater?

"It was a bit overwhelming and intimidating at first," she said. "I mean many great voices have performed in that theater, among them our own Oksana Dovgun. But I felt more at ease after meeting through the whole opera a couple of times. My colleagues and the acoustics there also drew the same really positive response. I didn't have that problem during the rehearsals. Everyone who heard me said my voice had no problem projecting at all."

Maybe before the "Turandot" run, Rachelle took lessons with Carol Pinto.

Socially, the part of Lia isn't really that demanding.

KEHARSAL on stage

THE SOPRANO with conductor, Maestro Hagen

She explained: "My part sits mostly on the middle range and the passages in the (emotional) part. But this requires a fuller and more lyrical quality in the voice. Puccini's figure lines are not easy to sing if you are not technically equipped for the part. The treatment for Lia's vocal parts is so delicate to fit her character. This requires the most precious punctuations to the most difficult high notes that have to be sustained. Heart-felt sighs in specific words and phrases must be done in a way that still makes the audience cry."

The "Turandot" production in Vienna has a unique and very contemporary concept, all the characters are insects and the costumes are real colorful. Still, the Puccini opus was staged in a grand opera.

She added: "But the story was still the same and each character is interpreted as close than any other Puccini character."

Rachelle did one more performance on April 6 and will also tour for the city's Lia (Stella Kanizo) in succeeding performances.

Also "Turandot" in Vienna, Rachelle will do "Tosca Angelotti" at the CCP in June and another Lia in the "Turandot" production of the Singapore Lyric Opera at the Esplanade Theatre and Mozart's "The Telephone," among others.

Rachelle's European debut was made possible by the recommendation of tenor Daniel Dimaya who exchanged his Viena audition's short notice and real good luck, Rachelle made it.

Licad and Rach

As I write this, Cecile Licad is part of what looks like a Rachmaninoff fever in Germany where she plays five performances of Rach 2 (three along for Rach's Piano Concerto No. 1) at the Apollo Theater in Siegen with the Philharmonie Südwestfalen under Daniel Raiskin and at the Stadthalle in Gottingen, Germany with the Gottinger Symphony Orchestra under Christoph Mueller.

In Germany and other parts of the world starting this month, there is a generous offering of Rach 2 with Vol-9/young hats in Dusseldorf; Derek Shumov in Munich, Russia with Andre Prieto in Costa Mesa in California; Langi ang in Dresden; and Stefan Grissaud in Graz, Austria.

Before her Siegen engagement, Licad was in thanks with the Philippine Philharmonic under Dante Santo who conducted two concertos—Beethoven No. 2 and Rach 2 and with Beethoven's "Egmont" Overture as filling opener.

As it turned out, Beethoven No. 2 was a fitting moment to Rach 2 and it was made more obvious by a slower tempo compared to the brisk, dynamic reading given by the Philippine Youth Symphonic Band and the Pandayan Virtuosi under Peralta Lasin.

The two chamber musicians that she is, Licad made the most out of what the PPO had to offer and gave the concerto in her illustrations as she plumbed through that otherwise youthful concerto.

As for the Rachmaninoff opus, Licad gave it another life as different from her 2004 Rach 2 with the PPO under Hungarian Barbieri. This issue Manila Rach 2 had an intense, if ominous, first movement (moderato) that peaked in the second fire and intensity of the second movement (adagio sostenuto) and a runaway climax in the last movement (allegro scherzando) that brought the house down and yielded 10 curtain calls.

For the same poet, PPO was a competent accompanist and it showcased its ever-ing conductor in Dante Santo.

In one of the most successful at the CCP box office, the concert was really sold out with hundreds of last-minute buyers turned away and a few left guarding at the lobby area making do with the TV monitor of Licad playing with the (00).

Thus far, this is a highly detailed pairing between the CCP and the Barcelonitis Presentation.

Licad discovery

PHILA music scholar Kennedy Blanco Montesano, the young pianist discovered by Cecile Licad during her 2002 outreach concert in Tagaytay City graduated last week with the highest weighted average. He also got the Manila scholarship award for music and a concertino qualifier at UP Diliman. They was heard in a recital on April 11 at Francisco Santiago Hall.

Rethinking the Licad phenomenon

By Allan Pedroza
Contributor

CECILE LICAD, INDOMABLE THE country's most famous prodigy, has given yet another two performances where we can witness what she pose in Lilliers extravagantly and neglects to highlight in any piece she attempts to tackle.

With celebrated conductor and maestro Oscar Peres and the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, she gave rather patchy renditions of the Beethoven 2nd and Rachmaninoff 2nd last March 26 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines—that is, decidedly boneyful in certain parts and crudely inappropriate and self-indulgent in others.

The thing is, if ever Mr Licad is to be considered a myth, it's in Roland Barthes' sense of the word, in that it is "neither a lie nor a confession: it is an inflection." So she might as well have been a byproduct of bourgeois notions of genius. She is an enunciation of how genius is made palatable.

Of course that has to be gone due credit for all the things she achieved and for the dynamism she has always been associated with. The problem is not whether she knows what she is doing because it would be ignorance and an impertinent to question she doesn't.

Interestingly, it is a question of justified risks (more than calculated ones) and what is convincing or just brilliantly appropriations of "personality."

CECILE Licad

Plankton

Licad's Beethoven 2nd suffered a great deal from what I believe were unresolved tensions of unwillingness and unpreparedness to commit. Licad's, of course, a total denial but. The unrecognizable confusion of the first movement from Mozart to Beethoven as akin to the degree of seriousness and rigor is brought about by the Enlightenment.

Licad's virtuosi and other such expectations within the last movements were feeble attempts at novelty. They consequently robbed the work of its structural integrity, resulting in a rubble of fragmented sections that did not resemble any meaning by themselves, or even if taken as a whole.

Her second movement was accurately different tastes. Exploitation of the lyrical possibility of any solo instrument, than to make possible by the composer's second movement, is, of course, a total denial but. The unrecognizable confusion of the first movement from Mozart to Beethoven as akin to the degree of seriousness and rigor is brought about by the Enlightenment.

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This particular case exemplifies certain rudimentary facts about pianists (however underdeveloped, considering her career in the concert) balancing act performed by artists between intuition and efficiency.

For one, intensity of movements is not directly proportional to intensity of sound, for some very basic interpretive concepts are overlooked.

It's didn't get the first and third movements of her Beethoven, it is primarily due to the fact that it is unwilling to take considerations like phrasing, sound production, spacing) out of what the classical concerto is built on.

The Rondo and third of the first movement from Mozart to Beethoven are akin to the degree of seriousness and rigor is brought about by the Enlightenment.

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Licad's lyricism proved to be of the most withering kind, if done within the bounds of reason. Her tones could be truly beautiful and charged with a full-ness which made for haunting lines.

More comfortable

His was understandably more comfortable with the Rachmaninoff 2nd. My suspicion, though, was lukewarm rather than anticipatory. His concerto is probably the most associated with her but, personally I didn't think she was up to the challenge of making it here once again.

There was more reservation in parts where the build-up is crucial than in figure at sections where some kind of direction was needed, given her proclivities for unjustified ritardandos.

So we heard less than what we were expecting from the final accelerando of the 4th movement leading to the allegro of the first movement, or even the ominous part for that matter—not to mention the whole, wavering Licad/Barnes negotiations all over the place.

Surely, most of the excitable sections were played with an almost intuitive elegance and with a couple of questionable deviations here and there, as in the entry of the solo in the adagio sostenuto movement. Licad opted for the "limping" accentuation of the main downbeats that was quite outdated and disconcerting even if Rachmaninoff himself practiced it.

She played four encores which included "Liebesleid" by Kreisler-Rachmaninoff; a Gottschalk piece whose title escapes me; and two Rachmaninoff pieces—"Humoresque" and "Lacrimosa."

Each of her performance of these works couldn't have been received as an addendum. I was tempted to conclude that they were rendered more convincingly and with an enormous amount of musicianship than what I might have hoped for from the concerto.

Ms Licad would always be part of the annals of this country's cultural history for what she has achieved and will still achieve. But there is a single most important force that governs a performer that has nothing to do and will have nothing to do with his or her station as a public figure—the stage.

The act will remain and hold various meanings for the audience within its limited duration—in that sustained space, where it's "make or break" from end to end until that last resounding applause.

There are chances which do not really accomplish about the artist's general reputation, or, as F Scott Fitzgerald put it to, "The Beautiful and the Damned"—"Intelligence is a mere instrument of entertainment."

Peta's 41st season focuses on writers and their work

By Victor Ang
Contributor

"WE HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US IN another year of wonderful theater experience," said Maribel Legarda, Artistic Director of the Philippine Educational Theater Association (Peta), to a large group of teachers at the launch of the theater company's 41st season.

Host settled in its new building, the Peta Theater Center (after having its longtime home at the Rizal Sulayman Theater in Intramuros for many years ago), Peta is once again teaming up with the drama teachers in schools and organizations to help them bring their brand of educational entertainment to many audiences.

The launch featured excerpts from upcoming productions, including song and dance numbers as well as staged readings of selected scenes.

Peta's popular kids' show "tsansi pesti" previews a few months before the new season opens in July, allowing potential show buyers to have a more tangible idea of what's in store for the coming year. It happens tomorrow (the buyers must have to prepare) (with an eye on doing the performers and budget justification for approval by higher-ups).

Touring production

What may be most appealing to organizations or schools outside of Metro Manila is the availability for touring of Peta's Children's Theater productions "Mga Kuwento ni Lola Basyang" and "Tatang Kasi." The energetic scenes featured colorful costumes, high-energy acting and upbeat tunes with titillating dialogues.

Scripts by Christine Bellen, "Lola Basyang" features three of Severino Reyes' folktales, while "Tatang Kasi" tracks the journey of a student named Pepito as he time travels and meets Pepe, the young Rizal.

"Direct both productions are performed by the same cast of actors, we offer a package where it's possible for the buyer to buy both shows on a heavy rate than buying just one production," said Jose Gonzales, public relations manager.

For example, the buyer could have a 11 a.m. performance of "Lola Basyang" for a younger audience and a 3 p.m. performance of "Tatang Kasi" for an older audience."

Peta provides the cast, crew, light and sound equipment, props and costumes, and even tickets. The regular rate at the Peta Center will be in September and October.

Writer in focus

Peta's 41st season "recognizes the role of the writer in crafting performances and shaping the messages for the audience," said Legarda.

"Thus, the theme 'The Writer and His Work.' The season involves works of major Filipino writers as adapted by contemporary writers to reflect our current conditions. And in the same tradition, it will showcase works by first-person writers to allow both our artists and audience to expand their perspective by allowing the works of these masters to mirror our own realities."

The season will kick off in July with "Noli/Fili," Nicanor Tiongson's adaptation of Rizal's two books, "Sedi Me Tungpar" and "El Filibusterismo," here our contemporary play set in a small town in the Cotton province.

In August, Peta is also recreating "Bayaf," a collaborative production with Black Box Theater of Japan and Pentire Theater of Singapore, with an initially scheduled run of last two shows.

"Our three companies explore Pentire's opera in three approaches. Peta sets its interpretation during the Japanese occupation of Manila and explores Japanese imperialism, patriotic love and selfish greed. The three interpretations intersect at common points and create a tapestry of interpretations," explained Legarda.

The production was first staged in Japan and will tour Asia after in Philippine premiere.

Ghost play

November will see a staging of a ghost play, "Sana Ito Nga Bukasid ng Dayendeyt?", featuring one character with "clairvoyant, clairaudient and clairsentient tendencies."

"But is the third of Tony Perez's trilogy on friendship, love and compassion, with the first two, "Chiadore, Huwag Tayo'y Magmadaliin Pa" and "Kahapontime, Noong Unang Araw Hanggang Bilis", produced by the Cultural Center of the Philippines in the 1990s.

"The season ends with a pseudo-festival in February to March called Alingaging The European Masters. This will showcase an end to a 10-month project that will take at least forty-odd artists, be they writers, directors and actors, in the study of European playwrights like Ibsen, Chekov and Strindberg," she said.

The project involves analysis of the texts as written during its time, eventually leading to the selection of specific scenes to be mounted in a laboratory production. The final showcase will see young Filipino playwrights adapting these classics into contemporary Filipino situations using various approaches and styles.

For details, call 4120022 or 0918-8000001, or e-mail petaproject@yahoo.com.

THE CAST of "Mga Kuwento ni Lola Basyang"

INSTITUTO Cervantes director José "Pepe" Rodrigues admiral looks lovers

THE Shanata cultural center's new home on Dit. Kalaw Street near Adamson University

Books gone wild at Instituto Cervantes

IT'S A BIGG, MAD DAY ON APRIL 10 when Instituto Cervantes celebrates Día Internacional del Libro (International Book Day).

From 10 a.m. to 12 midnight, bibliophiles can get their hands on a wide selection of books—children and young adult titles, dictionaries, novels, and nonfiction titles—all at Día del Libro book fair!

Brand-new books are available at even smaller prices, going for as low as P20.

And to make the deal even sweeter, Instituto Cervantes gives a red rose with every purchase.

Atwill Publishing, A Different Bookstore, and PowerBooks will sell books at 20 percent discount.

There will also be screenings of Spanish movies and a dance concert featuring choreographer and dancer Mara Beltrán.

Visitors may also avail themselves of guided tours and free Spanish lessons.

Spanish-language courses are also offered at a 15-percent discount (valid for certain schedules; limited slots only) for both old and new students.

Día del Libro also features "Cadena de Poemas," a two-hour nonstop poetry reading that starts 3:30 p.m.

Anyone can take part in this poetic chain.

Just bring a poem of your choice, in any language, and read it out loud.

Participants in "Cadena de Poemas" will receive a gift from Instituto Cervantes.

And to the evening, Instituto Cervantes transforms into a party central, as fabulous dance performances, swordfighting Spanish food and festive Latin music cap off Día del Libro.

Regularly observed worldwide on April 23, International Book Day was inspired by a tradition from Barcelona, Spain, that celebrates St. George's Day, where men and women exchange a rose for the gift of a book.

Día del Libro is presented by Instituto Cervantes in collaboration with the Embassy of Spain, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Fundación Miguel Hernández, and Manila's leading bookstores and Spanish restaurants.

Instituto Cervantes is on 835 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila. Call 526-1482 or log on to www.manila.cervantes.es.

Iligan workshop now open

THE 13TH ILIGAN NATIONAL WRITERS Workshop is now accepting applications and manuscripts for fellowships.

Fifteen slots, five each from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, are available for writing fellowships to the INWW on May 28-30 in Iligan City.

Applicants are required to submit five copies of one short story or a one-act play in Filipino, English, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Ilonggo, Waray, Chabacano, Maranao, Tausug, Maguindanaon (with translations), along with the applicant's biodata, two 2x2 photos, and a certification that his/her work is original. The certification may be issued by a Creative Writing professor or any person in authority attesting to the author's original work.

For short stories or plays, submit a hard copy and a 3.5 diskette or CD with the manuscripts encoded in MS Word.

Unpublished works are preferred. Writing fellows will be given free board and lodging, and a travel allowance. Applications must be postmarked on or before April 15.

Six applications or manuscripts will be accepted if sent by fax or e-mail. Manuscripts will not be returned.

Send applications to: Ms. INWW Jhoven Ordoñez Godlewski Bunga s/o OWDR, MSU-IIT, Iligan City. Call Pat Cruz at 063-3336131; e-mail owds-iligan@sdn.msuiit.edu.ph or thirtyoaksnet@yahoo.com.

15 fellows make it to UST workshop

THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO Tomas Center for Creative Writing and Studies (UST-CCWS) names the 15 fellows accepted to the 9th UST-CCWS National Writers' Workshop slated April 21-26 and which will be held at St. Raymund's Building, UST, and Casa de Tomas in Sagpulan, Laguna.

The fellows are: Mariane Anne Kristin Abuan, Jack Alvarez, Philip Rimpa Jr., Ildefonso Lario Jr., Michael Angelina Lirio, Christine Marie Magpile, Melvin Mesker, Anna Christina Nadora, Aubrie Navarrete, Deborah Rondilla Nieto, Geraldine Victoria Pagsolingan, Chester Palattao, Ramon Sevilla and Jeffrey Tan.

Ophelia A. Dimalanta, Cirilo Bautista, Ricardo Lee, Lito Zulueta, Charlson Ong and Al Hendarto comprise the panel of critics.

New book of wonder fiction

MILFLORES PUBLISHER'S latest release is a collection of modern wonder tales titled "Tales of Fantasy and Enchantment."

Edited by prize-winning fictionist and essayist Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo, the book brings together some of the most gifted young Filipino writers in what the editor describes as "the most interesting performances of the realm tale in the country today." They include modern fairy tales, reworked folk tales, re-fashioned legends, ghost stories, gothic tales, horror stories, futuristic fiction, and fantasies. The last part of the collection is that many of the stories are not just scary or marvelous, but funny."

Contributors include Vicente Garcia Groyon, Oli Dungcan, Ivan Francis Allan, Nikki Alfar, Muriel Schleyer Blanco, Ines IV Seeing, Ma. Romina M. Gonzales, Cyan Abad-Arago, Ian Rambo Casocot, Iliet de Mesa, Anna Sanchez, Emil Flores, Gisela M. Gonzales, Bj A. Pumbo, Jose Claudio B. Guevarra, Natasha B. Gonzalez, Andrea L. Peterson, Carlyn Javier and Samantha Schwarz.

"These are contemporary fables which weave old legends and monster tales with the new myths growing out of today's popular culture," says Hidalgo, who began writing and publishing her own modern tales in the early '90s with "Tales for a Child's Night" and "Where Only the Moon Rages."

The book's cover design is by Mary Muriel P. Sergson.

"Tales of Fantasy and Enchantment" is available at Fajardinal Book Store, Power Books, 07 Dean Bookstore, Popular Bookstore, Solidaridad Bookshop and Books by Lou. E-mail milflores@pldt.net or call 7216851.

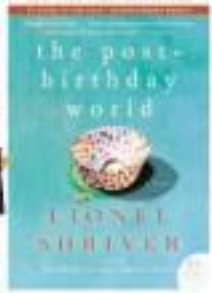
Unforgettable fire

By Raul De Nera

TRAGICHEROICS AND NECESSARY the choice between good guy—steady, smart, predictable—and bad boy—slick, dangerous, unreliable—lies at the fiery heart of most narratives.

But in Lionel Shriver's "The Post-Birthday World" (Harper Perennial, New York, 2007, 337 pages), that decision defines and redefines the book's very bones.

Shriver's eighth book walks that line with Nina McGovern, the heroine-cum-children's book illustrator living in London with de facto husband Lawrence, a policy analyst at a think-tank (the good guy). The birthday in the book's title is that of handsome and newly single professional player Ramsey Acton (the bad boy).



With Lawrence out of town, it is up to Irina to keep Ramsey company on the night of his birthday. But during that evening, the unfaceable ideas is raised with a world-changing choice: in his memory or not. It is "World's" conceit that the book details, in alternating chapters, what happened if she did, and if she didn't (see box).

If she hadn't kissed Ramsey, her shared life with steady, safe Lawrence is fortified, seemingly affirmed: "Those were the ensuing peak moments of domestic life: those Hedonian leaps of the heart on an ordinary night when your beloved walks in the door," even how some "people found the le-

Rookie inventions of home life welcome. Not $1 no, ice rhythms were musical."

But if the bad kissed Ramsey, Irina finds her world taken over by the very idea of Ramsey: "It was a whole world, his muscle, a whole unsuspected world, and kissing him reawakened the outer sense of discovery so chilling a clean drop of plain tap water under a microscope and divining whole schools of fantastic fleshless creatures."

Similarly, she now sees her emotions with Lawrence changed.

"There were no more surprises...or only the last surprise, that there were no more surprises. To torture herself, Irina kept looking, and looking, at Lawrence's face, like turning the key in an ignition several times before resigning herself that the battery was dead."

It is then that things get really complicated, in both possible worlds. Nothing is a given or safe, and the chosen paths skew wildly, ending up in places unexpected.

Tricky feat

Some readers may find this device to be too gimmicky or perhaps even a bit tiresome. While the idea of what if is often done in movies, it is a much trickier feat to pull off in books, yet Shriver does it well, through exquisite prose.

Guilt and longing are the book's resonants, haunting Irina regardless of her choice. "World" reshapes readers and takes them through the emotion-rendering ups and downs of intense relationships, all anchored on Irina, whom Shriver writes with a piercing sincerity.

You are only feel sorry for her but feel just how easily she is. The passion and profanity, sentimentalism and cruelty of Irish in Ireland all are brutal exhibit here, personal spaces invaded by tragedies of varied magnitudes.

Shriver does have moments, however, when the reader in believable forces of interactions about smokes, Northern Ireland and children's books, even going to remarkable lengths to provide context each in Irina's Russian heritage.

Complex structure

Every character bears with authenticity like where she really outlines herself it is "World's" complex structure.

It is not as just the subplots but the sentences themselves which may simply state plain. Shriver somehow manages to convince the readers that the two Irinas are actually the same woman, regardless of circumstances.

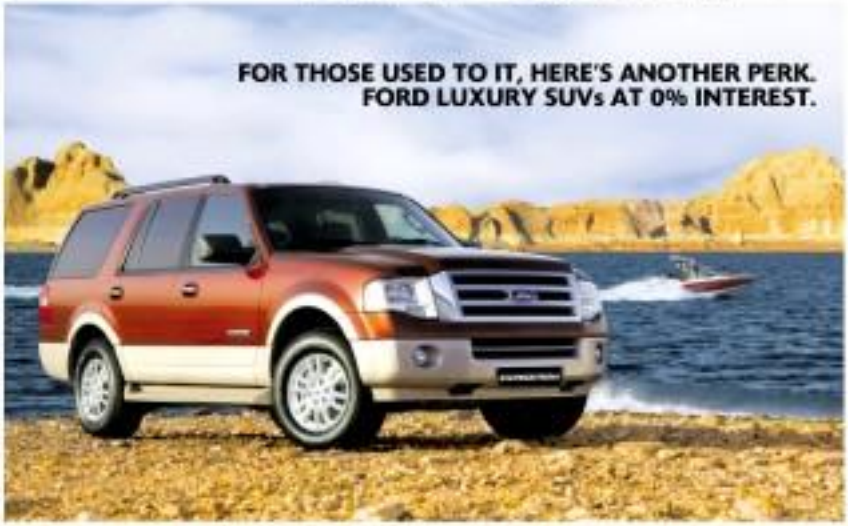
Armed with a cleverly reflective hardcover-white-book gambit, "World's" narrative is relentlessly intense, something that will escape and surely economics. Echoing the stages of a relationship, it gets heavier and more plodding close to the end, and then Shriver unveils endings that, if it's an all possible, downsell surely but also surprises.

It is almost opportunely cruel, suave and scarring.

"Outside the classroom, you can change your victim. It'll kill you all night, but you'll still be left standing. Trouble still seems ain't that you can't survive, but that you do. It's anybody survives. There's what nothing is or I_ living awful," Ramsey says.

It is a wretched-cool flirt, as Lionel Shriver reminds us in "The Post-Birthday World," is also utterly breathtaking.

Available in paperback from National Book Store.



IN EDUCATION
Lesson plan / p. F4
Rated PG / p. F4

LEARNING

Editor: learning@inquirer.com.ph
Celso Chelo Bunal Fortunco

It's Visit Teachers' Camp Year

The 100-year-old Baguio landmark gets a much-deserved facelift

BAGUIO roots will blossom this Teachers' Camp this year.

Text and photos by Jerry E. Esplanada

THE GOVERNMENT will not privatize the 100-year-old Baguio Teachers' Camp (BTC).

Education Assistant Secretary for Special Projects Jesus Jose Mislaya, in an exclusive interview with the Inquirer, said neither the Department of Education nor President Macapagal-Arroyo had such plans.

Yo Jusi, Mislaya, head of the DepEd special task force for the renovation of what is considered a heritage site, said the department saw the BTC as an ideal training and convention venue not only for teachers but also for the general public.

"That's why we have adopted the tag 'Our Home by the Clouds' as part of our marketing campaign to maximize the camp's potential," he said.

To help the President issued Proclamation 1338 declaring 2008 as the Visit Teachers' Camp Year.

Mr Arroyo and top DepEd and Department of Tourism officials are scheduled to visit the camp May 30 for the "grand launch" of the campaign.

It will officially kick off the year-long event, which has for its theme "Celebrating 100 Years of Educating the Nation."

Camp museum

Activities lined up to include a reenactment of the BTC founding, opening of the camp museum, concert for teachers, search for DepEd's Model Teacher of the Year, National High School Debating Championships, Halloween festival, and more.

Mislaya's Congress.

"The secretary of education, I think, would even consider privatizing the 25.7-hectare Teachers' Camp. It's the only one we have," said Mislaya, who is also camp officer-in-charge.

He said DepEd would not spend over P60 million retaining something that would be privatized.

Reports that the BTC would be privatized surfaced after the President directed government agencies holding office in the

SUNFLOWERS brighten up the BTC complex.

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Playgrounds for the MIND

What they remember about Woodrose

AN EXCLUSIVE GIRLS' school run by the Parents for Education Foundation (Para!), Woodrose may appear to some people to have been created for nothing more but to develop socialites. A local finishing school, in other words.

The school, located inside the Ayala Alabang Village in Muntinlupa, is actually 38 years old and counts among its graduates women who are now holding meaningful positions.

For alumna Francine Calero-Rarbo (Class '90), dean of the School of Communication at the University of Asia and the Pacific, it is not the perceived image but the kind of education Woodrose offered that makes parents choose the school.

"Many of my friends from there who are also mothers now only have one goal: To raise our kids as God-fearing individuals who will eventually serve society," she says.

Her fondest memories of Woodrose are of the one-on-one sessions with tutors, called research time.

The individualized tutorial that is unique to Para! schools finds students assigned a tutor — a teacher or a staff member. Tutor and student meet regularly to talk about students' concerns, hurdles in academics, or to allow students a completely self-directed formation in an atmosphere of personal freedom and responsibility.

Aileen Macaraeg (Class '2002), an executive of Mondo Visión Corp., says, "In the tutorial class, you are never told what you should do or how you should react to things. You are, instead, made to think for yourself and decide on matters accordingly."

Marielle Reuben (Class '99), 26, a member of the Philippine National Soccer Team and the Byanihan Dance Troupe, credits her Woodrose education for the ease with which she deals with all kinds of people and for her strong relationship with her family.

She also values the close ties her tutors and the close guidance she got. "It's just so reassuring to have someone looking after you, to have someone you could talk to about anything and everything," says Reuben.

Woodrose holds different mother-daughter/father-daughter activities to make parents understand their roles in their children's education and development.

Para! schools believe parents are the primary educators of their children.

When Macaraeg, Calero, and Reuben were in an informal gathering organized by alumnae coordinator Mylene Braga, hosted a Woodrose alumna, they talked as if they had known one another for years.

Recently, the Woodrose community — students, faculty, staff, alumnae, parents — participated, through the Woodrose Station Building Program, in Carmel Gallagher's Mr. 1908 Disney Mayenil project in Mallawan Village.

Macaraeg says, in Woodrose, learning does not stop in the classroom. As students they went on outreach projects, some times spending five days in a province with no water and electricity.

Inspired by what she did at Woodrose, Macaraeg started a project called Academic Improvement Movement. Volunteer students facilitate academic group tutoring after school hours.

Reuben recalls they used to go to a public school and teach kids English and mathematics. Now that she is a sports development director at Philippine Women's University (PWU), she appreciates that her teachers demanded academic excellence even as she made a name as team captain of the Woodrose soccer team.

Last year, she received an award from the Philippine Football Federation for inspiring Camp for Champs at Children Achieve more Playing Soccer, a camp for special children.

WOODROSE GIRLS: Francine Calero-Rarbo (Class of '90), Marielle Reuben (Class of '99) and Aileen Macaraeg (Class of 2002)

ROLL CALL

UE holds 2007-08 commencement rites

THE UNIVERSITY of the East (UE) will hold its Baccalaureate rites and pinned 2007-08 commencement ceremonies April 16-17. Distinguished UE alumni are guest speakers. Dates and venues are: Graduate School, College of Law and Dentistry, April 16, 3 p.m., UE Theater, Manila Campus; UE Manila Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Forensic Administration, Computer Studies and Systems, Education, and Engineering, April 17, 9 a.m., Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) Plenary Hall; UE Caloocan colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Engineering and Fine Arts, April 17, 2 p.m., PICC Plenary Hall.

Baccalaureate rites will be held for UE Manila candidates, April 16, 4 p.m., UE Conference Hall; UE Caloocan candidates, April 16, 4 p.m., Open Field.

Commencement speakers are former Ayala Corporation executive Wilhelmo D. Sinsuat, UE LAW 1978; international business executive Carlos R. Alindada, UE BSA 1964; and award-winning photographer Edgar B. Bonilla, BFA 1972.

Graduates include Richardson F. Ravot, UE Caloocan BS Accountancy, magna cum laude; Andrea Nika T. Rosario, UE Manila-DSBA Marketing Management, Leadership Award for Promotion; UE Manila—Alvin T. Co, cum laude (Arts and Sciences), Joseph Ian C. Asuncion, magna cum laude (Business Administration), Linus M. dela Torre, summa cum laude (Computer Studies and Systems), Michelle Marie T. Avella, cum laude (Education), and Charlston S. Uy, cum laude (Engineering); UE Caloocan—Renzo B. Bacud, cum laude (Arts and Sciences), Nicris S. Fullecial, cum laude (Engineering), and James Patrick P. Timoteo, magna cum laude (Fine Arts).

UP Baguio holds summer arts workshops April 14-25

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines Baguio will hold its summer arts workshops and seminars April 14-25 as part of the university's centennial celebration.

Part of the two-week extension program of UP Baguio's College of Arts and Communication, the workshops for children and adults will be on the visual, performance and literary arts, and language and communication arts.

For children, the workshops will be on drawing and cartooning, acrylic painting, paper arts, writing, kiddie broadcasting, video technique and song-and-poem creation, children's creative writing and basic journalism.

Workshops for adults will be on movement by theater, street dance, digital photography and imaging, short film-making and portraiture.

For teachers and graduate students, seminar-workshops are scheduled on teaching creative writing, theater as pedagogy, language research in teacher education and speech in language studies.

There will be a special seminar on computer-assisted English and Korean syllabi for teachers teaching English to Koreans.

As part of the program, the Cultural Center of the Philippines will bring to UP Baguio the Batang Sining, a five-day workshop on puppetry, on blog for children, story telling and performance.

For inquiries, call UP Baguio College of Arts and Communication at tel. (074) 4443093, 0910-2564005 or 0917-5560088 or e-mail cac@upb.edu.ph.

Summer courses at Miriam College

MIRIAM College (MC) has ten educational programs for children this summer. Children aged 7-16 can enroll in a two month program that includes storytelling, cooking, music and arts. Elementary-level courses include reading, Math, English, Filipino, Araling Panlipunan, creative arts, etc. Environmentalists can join the Summer Eco-Camp for Kids. Classes in Mandarin, French, Spanish, Nihongo, and Sign are also offered. A Filipino class will be considered for foreigners. 10 years old and above. Other programs are basic photography, jewelry making and knitting. Courses on personal and professional development, guidance counseling, and special education are also offered. Call the Planning and Development Office, 4896486 extension 1102 or 0918-2255040.

Blueprint for success

THE MORNING STAR Montessori in East Rizal has completed its statement of mission, vision and values until 2012. It presented recently its markers of success, with emphasis on values, during an event attended by Mayors Maria Lourdes Datiles Fernando of Marikina and Misi Ilagan of Cainta. Head Fernando stressed the importance of giving children a value system. Ilagan said reinforcing the mission, vision, values would enrich the school's curriculum. The changes, school president, said the school had to adapt to changing times and a changing world.

Scholarship tests

BUR LADY of Fatima University (OLFU) is conducting scholarship examinations for free every Saturday among high school graduates. Examinees will determine the tuition fee discount, 10-100 percent, a student will get. Exams in the OLFU Valenzuela and Quezon City campuses are held at 8 a.m. then at 10:30 am. Students in the Antipolo area may call 6888474 or 6456360 for the schedule.

ALEX Lim

EDMUNDO Quiocho

FERDINAND Sarbo

DEMETRIO Salpag

RP education for global jobs

SEVERAL graduates with MBA, Executive MBA, and Ph.D. in Management/Political Economy of the International Academy of Management and Economics (IAME) (sys-ed) have become top managers of multinational corporations in Asia-Pacific and the United States.

These include Ferdinand Sarbo, Kuala Lumpur-based general manager for Asia of Johnson and Johnson Tylo Glue Line, global quality manager of Khalsa, an information technology multinational in Silicon Valley, San Jose, California; and Alex C. Lim, product development manager of an IT MNC in Midland, USA.

Edmundo Quiocho was country manager of Dae Pharmaceutical in Hong Kong, while Demetrio P. Salpag Jr. is now an international consultant in human resource development of American multinational corporations in China, Japan, US, Thailand, and Vietnam.

IAME is at the first Pacific International Tower, 11901 Metropolitan Avenue, Makati City, tel. 8963763/68, 09180143273, e-mail iame-rp@lsmo.edu.ph, website: www.iame.edu.ph.

HONORARY DEGREE

The Philippine Normal University, with the Commission on Higher Education, conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws on Chief Justice Reynato Puno (2nd from right) during its 85th commencement exercises. Presenting the citation are PNU board chair Dr. Helena Z. Benitez (on Puno's right) and university president Dr. Amelia B. Reyes (2nd from right). Also in photo are (from left) CHED NCR director Dr. Amelia Bglaira; Asst. Laura Baja Jr., Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Franklin Ebdalin, Justice Manuel Lazaro and Justice Bernardo Pardo. In the back (extreme right) is Dr. Pamchal Mangkhorntong of Thailand who received an honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities.

Oh the joys of summer

"I DON'T WANT MY CHILD TO WASTE time this summer," says a teacher I will call Maria. "Every morning, I would like her to go to computer class, let bowed by math. In the afternoons, she would also take science lessons, piano, and reading. I found that a certain school offers swimming lessons too, so I am thinking of enrolling her on this, too. What content do you think offers the best component programs? The best math? By the way, my daughter loves art. Do you know of good art summer?"

Queenie S. Lee-Chua

Maria, like all of us, wants the best for her child. As a parent, I understand the urge to help our kids master skills during the summer break, so that classes big topics loom as for the coming school year.

After all, students who have not passed certain subjects are required by schools to do remedial work in summer, before they can be admitted into the higher level the following school year.

When I was in grade school, these remedial courses were known as "summer classes." We looked with pity on those unfortunate souls who could not enjoy the glorious summer days, holed up as they were in monotonous enlarged classes.

Things have changed since. Summer remedial classes still exist, but there are also enrichment classes, from academics to non-curricular activities, from rigorous training in basic programs. When children should take to a musical instrument, prestigious and goal, for the cardinal rule is: do not overload.

'Wasting' time isn't so bad

I have just stated that, as parents, I understand the need to make the most of summer, to come up with activities that will "fill your summer time."

But, in my educator, I may have to disagree.

Summer vacation is mandatory for a simple reason—children need a break from structured studies. After all, employees are required by law to take off for two consecutive weeks after several months. For children and teens, who are still growing up, a break is even more essential.

When we were in grade school, my siblings and I spent summer vacations with our cousins. In the morning, we read books (carry a textbook among them), and coloring, answered math and calculation exercises (some morning, we read books (carry a textbook among them), and coloring, answered math and calculation exercises (sometimes even puzzle books). In the afternoons, after a nap, we played basketball in bad names, and losers. At night, we played blancpoly, poker (with play money of course) and Mah-jong (with the real thing). We watched shows all of us loved, such as "Mara Clara Kabisa," "Flames Woman," and "Adriana's." Some times we set up our own musical shows or skits, and we formed our own club, with secret codes and passwords and activities.

Many of us were attended structured summer lessons and, looking back now, I don't think we needed it. Most very little, most of us were at or near the top of our classes up to college.)

Don't get me wrong. I am not against summer classes, when done to motivation. Math? Fine. Art? Sure. Swimming? Okay. But do not add component or science or reading to the mix. With those daily classes, children already have enough to master.

Besides, ask what my son does during the summer break. Yes, he attends classes, but those change based on his interests and goals. For instance, when Scott saw that he scratched for a month his first summer session, a daily two-hour art class, five minutes from our place. My son loves to draw, but since his school only offered art class for 40 minutes once a week, this was not enough to develop his skills. Scott did the same thing the next summer.

Scott also participates in math, and has experienced for school in competitive learning from Grade One. So, when he was seven, he attended a math problem-solving program in Ateneo, which I researched. The program, which lasted for a week, required daily assignments and complex problems, but it incorporated games like Sudoku and origami, and Scott looked forward to every session. A year later, he did almost-choice lessons, again in a center 30 minutes from our place.

This summer, he chose to continue the math program, and opted to take taking a new course table to add variety in his school, three times a week, for one month.

What does Scott do the rest of the time? Every day, he reads, swims, and draws. At times he writes poems, composes songs, or plays Clarithaben or I tips on the computer. His routine is repetitively come over to play. Sometimes, his classmates visit. He has piano lessons twice a week. With his father, Scott plays life games (boating, scouts), board games (Game of Life, Lord of the Rings) or strategy (Battleship, Clue). On weekends, I bring him to the bookstore, where he spends two hours browsing, late in other months. Oh yes, and every afternoon, he takes a cool nap. After all, exercise play demands concentration.

Let children play

Play—unstructured, free play—is one of the most important activities in human development. In play children can weave their own stories, act out their own dreams, and do things at their own pace. In our hectic world, children (and adults, too) need that's own space to do their own daydreaming, which research has shown, to be an essential component of creativity.

I told Maria that I couldn't use my comment on one specific course, since most have similar programs, among. I concluded her to check out the one nearest their place. Her kind her to give her daughter breathing room and, most of all, to let her daughter play.

Our children need a break this summer. Let them play. Let them dream.

Let them play, let them dream... children need a break from rigid routines

Queenie S. Lee-Chua is professor of biochemistry and Psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University. Contact her at lee-chuaq@yahoo.com.

ROLL CALL

OFFICIALS and lecturers of the Millennium Preparatory Review Network (Millennium-PRN), a review center for nurses, inaugurated recently in Cubao branch. At photo are Antonio Cruz, Dr. Ruben Sapan, PRN chair Alex Tarrazona, Lecturers, Teodoro Villanueva, Steven Andrada and Nino Sapon. The Manila-based Millennium-PRN also has branches in Baguio, Batangas, Legaspi, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cebu, Zamboanga and Davao.

Student visa orientation

A STUDENT visa orientation will be held April 25, from 9:30-11:30 a.m., at the PAAF-Education USA Center, 1897 Ayala Life-FGU Center, 6811 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

The orientation is organized by the Philippine-American Educational Foundation (PAEF). A consul from the United States Embassy's non-immigrant visa section will explain the process for applying for a student visa.

Admission is free. Due to limited space, those interested should reserve a seat before April 22, tel. 8128965, e-mail kathy@philpaef.org.ph.

Gift of knowledge for the youth

EMBALLES distributed gift bags recently to some 200 students of the Teodoro Alonso Elementary School in Bgy. Mustang, Project 4 District, QC.

The activity was part of the 11-year-old annual gift-giving project Caballero's call "Gabaldon," which is the "Kid #1 You Can, but #2 You Want" endeavor in way of sharing its blessings.

The gift bags contained food, school supplies, toiletries, toys and books donated by the National Bookstore.

Caballero funded the campaign by setting aside a percentage of every commission earned in December. During the event, Caballero presented Muntinlupa Mayor Aldrin Cortez and Bookstore Chief Executive Officer Manuel Bonoan with a plaque of appreciation.

During the event, Caballero presented Muntinlupa Mayor Aldrin Cortez and Bookstore Chief Executive Officer Manuel Bonoan with a plaque of appreciation.

Caballero encouraged students to read and learn and finish their studies.

Last year Caballero spearheaded the renovation of the school's library. The National Book Store Foundation donated 150 storybooks while a wall mural was painted by fashion and commercial model Rubina Mamonquit.

Call 37 23 19, 42 90 00 or 81 38 623 for catering.

New course for marketing practitioners

THE INSTITUTE OF TRANSFORMATIVE Marketing Communications (ITMC) is holding a workshop, "Transformation PR in Real Estate," on April 23 at the Diamond Hotel in Roxas Blvd. in Manila.

The course will feature, among others, old versus new tools in promotions, selling to the overseas market using new media, managing developer and property reputation, communicating to investors, etc. Fee is P7,000.

Call 81 25828 or 0917-5264824, visit www.itmc.com.ph or e-mail info@itmc.com.

Summer Sports Training '08

ROMBLOMME Malls is giving free Summer Sports Training by the country's top coaches and trainers. Volleyball will be featured April 28 at Robinsons Nova Market with George Pascua, assistant coach of the Philippines Men's Volleyball Team.

Taekwondo will be offered May 4 at Robinsons Place Ilocandia, and May 25 at Robinsons Place Iloilo. Jose Mello, senior instructor of the Philippine Taekwondo Association and head coach of Philippine National Team, will conduct the class. Bonnie Magnaye, one of the Philippine Basketball Association's 25 Greatest Players and assistant coach of the Purefoods Tender Juicy Giants, will conduct basketball training May 25 at Robinsons Place Iloilo and May 31 at Robinsons Place Lipa. Only the first 30 participants will be accepted. Summer Sports Training 08 is co-presented by Beta Sports. (0906 5074 Ernie / 0917 821 Ernie)

Makati's most outstanding public school teacher honored

ILIHA ELEMENTARY East Rembo Elementary School was chosen Makati's most outstanding public elementary school teacher this year by the Rotary Club of Makati Emerald East.

The selection drive for contest of the East Rembo Elementary School Mustard—containing nearly of the one-small antique artifact collection that she donated to the school. Now on its 18th year, the club's annual search for Most Outstanding Teacher in Makati's public schools involves a different subject every year.

This year, nominees were teachers of Mahabagan, the former Nelson Geographics, Kalayaan, at Sining or Geography (History, and Civics) that re-placed Social Studies.

Other winners were Arlene Carizosa, Nest Elementary School, for re-assessment; Rosa Roman, West Rembo Elementary School, second runner-up; and Jamyle Ramona, P. Benitez Elementary School, third runner-up.

Honorable Mention were Celso Tarrazo of Palanan Elementary School; Ms. Luisa Laguerta of San Jose Elementary School; and Arlene Bautista of Carmona Elementary School.

Board of Honor during the awarding ceremonies were Bro. Felipe Belleza, president of La Salle Greenhills, who talked on the "Duty of Teachers in Inspiring Nationalism and Love of Country." Department of Education National Capital Region director Jesus Bonifacio represented Secretary Jesli Lapus.

The Rotary Club of Makati Emerald East, led by president Ray Madrid, awarded certificates and cash prizes to the winner and the nine finalists. He was assisted by past president Joel Tan, Bro. Felipe, and Director Constantine. Philip Nazareno chaired the project.

It's Visit Teachers' Camp Year

Pantagraph F1

camp resource use. The agencies included the National Police Commission, Philippine National Police Training Center for the Cordillera Administrative Region and the Philippine Public Safety College.

DepEd officials say the agencies did not pay rent.

Ms Arroyo has yet to decide on the fate of the Philippine Sports Commission that has been running offices in the camp since the 1970s.

Recapturing old glory

The DepEd, Heritage Conservation Society and the University of the Philippines Redevelopment Foundation are working together to restore camp Dangwa and recapture its lost glory in time for the centennial rites.

The camp was founded on April 6, 1908 by the Thomasites, a group of young American educators who came here to teach English and other subjects.

Camp structures had the architectural style of early colonial buildings in the City of Pines. ... Jens wooden edelweiss-trimmed buildings with green ornamental windows and doors, green roofs and concrete driveways.

At present, 100 close to 50 dormitories, cottages and guesthouses that can accommodate 1,700 persons; eight auditoriums; function 13,320 persons and two movie halls.

Malaya said, "Our vision is to upgrade the facilities, make them first class facilities allowing the camp's character and status as an academic center and use the camp's full potential."

He said they wanted BTC to remain as excellent venue for teacher training and recreation.

But, aside from professionalizing operations and getting government offices out of the camp, Malaya said there was the growing problem of illegal settlers.

Morale problem

He said "most of the 2000 or so squatter families are DepEd employees." Evicting them, he said, would create a morale problem.

"It's a good thing the President issued (Proclamation 633) setting aside 154,000 square meters of the camp) for 'housing,'" he said.

Malaya said he told the Gilgadonchos "status quo muna tayo ... But the moment you start constructing additional structures, then we will have to deal with you accordingly."

He said the "redevelopment program" was "over 90 percent complete."

Malaya said they asked the Development Academy of the Philippines to take a close look at the operations of the camp, which has 127 employees.

He said the camp's prospective markets would continue to be government employees and the spillover from Baguio hotels and inns.

The camp is open seven days a week. Operating rates range from P98 to P168 a day for DepEd personnel, P133-P178 for other government employees, and P168-P1,050 for others.

For cottages, the camp charges P1,080-2,000 for DepEd personnel, P1,300-2,300 for other government employees, and P1,680-2,200 for others.

"Converting the camp into a resort for visitors and the arts and a convincing tourist draw is in line with the DepEd's objectives of increasing camp revenues and ultimately making the BTC self-sustaining by phasing out its P16-million annual government subsidy," he said.

At present, the camp averages P12 million in annual earnings.

A REFURBISHED mess hall and cottage looks almost brand-new. The government has already spent over P40 million to rehabilitate the 100-year-old BTC.

Raise your hand

ALTHOUGH THE LEADING SECTOR'S MAG-es issue was launched at the tailend of the school year, we thought we might as well come out with the first issue(s) in Education (EI) lesson plan-do a taste of helping teachers and students expand learning through the use of newspapers in the classroom. Of course, it is our hope as well to foster the habit of newspaper reading among the young generation.

The EI-ready guides may be used this summer by schools that offer classes, be they for remedial, orientation or enrichment purposes. They may also do some good to parents who are looking for something they can do with their children who are home for the summer break.

To make sure we are reaching the right audience, we asked teachers who are interested to using the lessons as a learning tool to send an SMS and e-mail messages. Thankfully, we got feedback from as far north as Buena Beija to as far south as Agusan del Sur.

Here, talking back, are just a few of the teachers who took the time to let us know what they thought of our first issue.

Jennigel Lupena Jolaños
English teacher, Tulacogon Memorial High School, Agusan del Sur

Got hold of your maiden issue today. I'm an English teacher from Mindanao. Though the school year has come to a close, I would like to prepare myself this early for the coming school year by expressing my interest in using PEI as one of my classroom learning tools. As a teacher who comes from a far-flung area with limited resources, I'm very thankful that this paper has come up with this brilliant idea. Definitely, this would be a huge lift not only for me but for all teachers as well. More power, PEI staff.

Raul Anthony V. Gonranco
Metro Manila

I am a graduate student (Master of Arts in Education) at the University of the Philippines. I am currently an assistant principal in one of the schools in QC. I am also an incoming part-time professor for education students majoring in biology at a university in Cavite this June. I saw the March 31, 2008 issue of PEI Learning section, specifically lessons in Education. I find the idea very helpful to us educators. Although the idea is not new because students have been using the newspaper as a tool in teaching, I find it a fine that there's an actual curriculum guide for us educators to infuse it to our class.

If you could use biology education as a theme in one of your future issues, it would be most helpful. If you can send information to me regarding lessons in biology education, I would definitely use it in my high school and college classes. Thank you very much.

Paula I. Saludares
Bacolod, Negros Occ.

I'm interested to avail of the lessons in Education. I'm a classroom teacher and a school paper adviser at the Divine Canonesses Dorcas Memorial High School, Bacolod, Negros Occ. I will include these in my lessons this coming school year. Thank you for this great help you extend to us teacher. More power.

Jose Michael de Asis
Teacher

Having read your column today, I'm pretty much excited to inquire about the idea of using the lessons as a tool in my daily instruction so as to be a good teacher. I hope this will not end that much, or better, comes here ... Thank you very much!

Nicole Munar
Psychologist and educator, Bacolod City, Negros Occ.

Cheers! I was thrilled to finally see your new section on education and learning—you have made education very happy indeed.

A few suggestions though. One, your lessons in Education feature allow awesome possibilities. Perhaps there could be a way to design lessons plans specific to Primary (1-3), Intermediate (4-7), HS or college levels, even particular subjects. Your information search feature, for instance, is in the English curriculum in Philippine for the 3rd quarter. How great it would be if your issue plans could be integrated with the existing curriculum in a timely manner.

Two, in my experience, some of the most helpful materials are those that can be easily photocopied for use in the classroom by students: activity sheets like graphic organizers, interesting journal pages, paper puppets, post-reading process activities, even guidance activity sheets for character education would surely be appreciated by teachers.

Three, kindly publish pieces that can really help parents and teachers in their job of educating young people. Why not a column for parents and teachers to ask their questions? Learning is based on the assumption that a child is ready to learn—and readiness to learn is to turn dependent on the learner's physical, emotional and psychological well-being. Parents can do plenty and we can empower them. Dianne does this beautifully albeit often in a way that's biased towards black education.

I look forward to next week's issue.

calling all parents • calling all parents • calling all parents

ARE YOU a parent who is hands-on when it comes to your children's education? Do you care about what goes on at your kids' schools? If you're willing to share tips, tricks, fears and trials with other parents relating to the education of your children, you're welcome to contribute to Raised PG, a column for parents. Email your 600 words or less to learning@inquirer.com.ph or fax to 897-4795 or 96.

INQUIRER IN EDUCATION

What is news?

A lesson plan on the 5Ws + H

THE INQUIRER IN EDUCATION PROGRAM offers study guides that make use of the features to teach communication skills and other core subject content.

This lesson is about the news, the true-to-life stories from around the community, the country and the world collected and published by a newspaper like the Inquirer. News stories may be about people and places, about products and services, about accidents and natural disasters, about sports and movies, among other things.

This is the first in a series of lessons designed to get students started on the habit of reading the newspaper, as well as to reinforce the basic skills required by the curriculum. It may be adjusted to meet student abilities.

This lesson may be used by teachers (and parents at home) for students in grade school (3-7). For high school students, teachers may specify more difficult reading selections of the newspaper.

Teachers: If you are interested in using the lessons in your classroom, e-mail learning@inquirer.com.ph or text 09189204063. Include your full name, your school and the grade level or subject(s) you teach.

Activity Sheet

1. STORY HEAD	PAGE:
Where the story about?	
What happened?	
When did it happen?	
Where did it happen?	
Why did it happen?	
How did it happen?	
2. STORY HEAD	PAGE:
Where the story about?	
What happened?	
When did it happen?	
Where did it happen?	
Why did it happen?	
How did it happen?	
3. STORY HEAD	PAGE:
Where the story about?	
What happened?	
When did it happen?	
Where did it happen?	
Why did it happen?	
How did it happen?	

Bringing up teenagers

Dealing with a teener can be daunting, but sometimes parents cause their own problems

By Regina B. Go

A FRIEND'S INCOME TEEN daughter has shifted to-you-know-looks to-looking boys, of course) asked me recently how I dealt with my own teen years. The truth is, I'm still dealing with them.

Where do I start? I guess from the very beginning, when my son transferred to Philippine Science High School and his attitude somehow changed. He was a diligent and responsible student in his elementary days at Ateneo School. He was the type who got parental or grandmother who didn't do their part in a project.

Initially, my son had been enticed to transfer to a school where everyone is perceived to be competent and responsible. But wearing the blessing of his seventh grade, he told me that he wanted to stay in family. His babies and I advised him then that Xavier would always be an option and fall back for him should things not work out at PSci. We asked him to give PSci a try for at least a year.

As we were telling him these things, I was unaware of how hard it would be, for our parental ego to accept that he'd have to go back to Xavier because he could not cough it out in those two years.

My son had his ups in Math in early-to-his freshman year. His teacher said he was fairly and smartly relying on hundred-hounded-per-the-hour-three-quarters of the year. While he was passing, such a practice was unacceptable and would catch up with him in the latter part of the school year.

This enough, he had to take "remedials" (a second final exam) in Math that year. I was so rattled and panicky at this point. I asked him if he needed a tutor. He looked at his book to gauge if I could learn their lessons so I could guide him (ayaw pa din kaya 'no!). When he aced the second finals, I felt I had proved my point that he could achieve an awesome with focus and diligence.

Troubling truth

Always when I look back to that time, I'm convinced that my intentions had been noble, yet I cannot dismiss the troubling truth that I might have pushed him and egged him on because I could not accept that he would flunk Math in his first year at PSci. His failure would be a reflection on me as his mother.

Thankfully, his second year at PSci was relatively smoother. I kept reminding him to keep pace with school requirements so that he wouldn't have to go through his final year match exasperation. He got decent grades, but they were not impressive.

Third year was the same, he still was just running along most of the time. He'd study only when he needed to.

He had other activities... soccer, guitar practice and jamming with a band. These were fine by my husband and me because we wanted him to have a balanced life. What we detested were the distractions of online games (Ragnarok to particular). He was a homebody and had no friends that he'd meet for the computer almost all the time to the point that he'd sacrifice studying and sleeping.

While having possession of his desire for "space," I often reminded him of his responsibilities. I told him that I'd always do that as a mother so that just had to learn to live with it. I also said if he wanted to be treated like an adult, he should start acting like one, and one manifestation of such is maturity in handling one's responsibilities at home, school or anywhere else.

Careful

All that time, I was careful not to push him anyway. I had heard stories about the fragility of the youth. Unconsciously my husband and I somehow were phenomenal coaches in dealing with our first teenager. My husband was but an easy-going soul, I was realistic the least, and since moms do it more resolved a point where she has felt like he had really to listen.

What matters most

It was in the latter part of his junior year when I began to realize what matters most regarding my children. Did I desire of good grades and academic achievements be my kids out of pride? Maybe I was after people commending me on how well I've raised my children?

Immediately at her that epiphany, I told my son that what was important to me was that my kids were whole. I not depressed or suffering from a low self-confidence), happy, well-rounded, adaptive and productive people. Whatever successes and accomplishments they reap in life would be mere bonuses.

Ben (and Bea is also M.IT), I also told him and the two girls that my wish was for them to continuously get motivated to give their best in everything they do because it would be such a waste if they don't change their capabilities.

In the course of dealing with my son's teenage years, I've realized that no problem/mistake/big one children is insurmountable. Think about it. Almost all issues plaguing parents of teenagers, other than murder or drug abuse, are not doomed-called difficult to surpass.

Some may be frustrating to the parents, or life-altering to an extent for the kids—as in the case of pregnancy or rapid mix—yet they can be survived. They cannot be the end of the world for them and for their parents.

I tell my kids that problems look so daunting in the present, but it is not uncommon for people to laugh about them afterwards.

Ally, not enemy

I also remind them frequently to think of me as an ally and not as the enemy. Of course they may have to face the outcomes and consequences of a bad behavior once they let me know about it, but that is nothing compared to what I as a parent can do to get their act of their dilemma. Parents may want to teach their children a lesson but it is not necessarily for people to laugh about them afterwards.

Am I happy with my relationship with my kids, especially the teenagers? The biggest question is, are they happy with me? I don't have any complaints for now and I hope they don't as well. I think their dad and I have convinced them of our love for them and of our willingness to provide them everything they need (including opportunities) to be successful. Between they define it) and happy in life.

Regina B. Go says she helps a soft and creative adviser will always have priority over her being a business executive.

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ramon G. Velarde

Lani Ledford: inquirer.net/ramongat@inquirergroup.com (PDI Global) and (63-2)/email us at entertainment@inquirer.net.ph

Next stop: 'Oprah'

CHARICE PEMPENGCO, THE 15-YEAR-OLD Pinoy singing sensation, lays down the vocal tracks for two of the songs in her forthcoming first limited-edition album. She just returned from a guest stint on the "Oprah Winfrey Show," in which she was asked to sing "And I Am Telling You, I'm Not Going" from the musical, "Dream girls," and the Whitney Houston hit, "I Will Always Love You." She sang the same two songs as a special guest on US television's "Ellen" (hosted by Ellen DeGeneres). Charice recently taped a special episode for "The Oprah Winfrey Show," where she shares the limelight with other gifted children. The episode airs in May. Full story tomorrow, by Pinkahi Concepcion.

Special Cannes section sets Manila screenings

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE DIRECTORS FORTNIGHT, a section in the Cannes International Film Festival that showcases works of talented new filmmakers, is taking a global route—and Manila is part of it.

To mark its 40th anniversary, organizers of the Director's Fortnight section recently announced a world tour of movies that have been part of the event over the years.

The tour kicked off on April 4 in Athens and Thessaloniki, Greece, where selected films will be screened until April 16, according to a report on www.variety.com.

A statement from the organizers of the Cinemanila International Film Festival confirmed the country's participation on host to these screenings. A number of Fortnight films will be shown during the CIFF here between Aug. 9 and 23, the statement said.

Negotiations for Manila to host the event began last year, when Olivier Pere, Fortnight artistic director, flew in to head the jury of the 2007 Digital Lolad Competition, said Cecille Guidote-Alvarez of the National Center for Culture and the Arts.

The NCCA is one of the sponsors of the annual Manila film fest.

Only four Filipino directors have so far been featured in the Fortnight, Danny Mor

SPECIAL 17

Kristine, director don't see eye to eye

TROUBLE IS BREWING ON THE SET OF "Princess ng Buryong," Lead star Kristine Hermosa and Direk Andoy Ranay don't see eye to eye.

The series is supposed to air 40 July but as the cute things are going, the soap may run only up until May 3 network insider squealed.

"Kristine ramps the style of Direk. Jinglong ayaw ng daw niyo nag-aaping kasi di na aloe magsuuka ang away. Eher maraka the script before doing her scenes. Direk is

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

so fed up with her days-held bleeding to Kristine andoong diverse on ang ang nagsasalo. Gayong naman ang case ng vaginitis, direk," the insider said.

The source added: "There was an emergency meeting. Direk Andoy said that if the series were to be extended for another season, they should count him out na. ABS-CBN bigwigs refuse to let him go because the show is big cousins. Direk even

www.inq7.net, sa

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3 ASYLUM
4 SHUTTER
5 SEMI-PRO
6 10,000 BC
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LIPA

1 HORTON
2 SUPAHPAPALICIOUS
3 P.S. I LOVE YOU
4 SUPER FIGHTERS

DASMARIÑAS

1 MEET THE SPARTANS
2 SHUTTER
3 DOOMSDAY
4 DAN IN REAL LIFE

IMUS

1 THE AIR I BREATHE
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ANGELES

1 FOOL'S GOLD
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TARLAC

1 MEET THE SPARTANS
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3 MY BROTHER'S WIFE

STARMILLS

1 OVER HER DEAD BODY
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5 HALF BLOOD SAMURAI
6 KITE RUNNER

BACOLOD

1 MEET THE SPARTANS
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5 SUPAHPAPALICIOUS
6 SHIL

ILOILO

1 MEET THE SPARTANS
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3 DOOMSDAY
4 STEP-UP
5 10,000 BC
6 SLEUTH

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THE PODIUM

The Incredible family is back: Lucrecimelde (Chevy Piz Pizarro) and her three gay sons (Pete Wheeler, John Pratt, and Jay Manuel).

Now, they want to add a new member to their outrageous family and asks the help of a baby mother (Ruffa Mae Quinto) to make their dreams come true.

OPENS APRIL 16
AT SM CINEMAS

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VISAYAS • MINDANAO

'Friends' alumnus Courteney Cox-Arquette plays a tabloid editor in 'Dirt' (Velvet Channel). She talks to INQUIRER about being a paparazzi target

Candidly, Courteney

VIDEOGRAPHERS are "tougher" than the photographers, she avows coyly.

By Marinel R. Cruz

HOLLYWOOD—COURTENEY COX-Arquette, who plays a tabloid mag's editor-in-chief in FX Network's "Dirt," says the way to survive gossip is to be ignorant about it. Literally, if possible.

"Ignorance is bliss. If you're not aware of it and don't start looking for it, life will be so much easier," Courteney says. "I don't read any of these magazines, except [during pre-production work for the show]. It's like candy. You can't stop."

Courteney has had her own unpleasant experiences with the paparazzi and tabloid press.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

"They call my publicist to say they're going to smear this or that. The latest one... I read in a magazine that I had just come out of my doctor's office. It said I was going through menopause and that I was quiet because I can't have another child. I was like that all the time."

"Dirt" revolves around Lucy Spiller (Courteney) and her long-time friend Don Bradley (Ian Hart), chief photographer and ad-time Dirt manager. Together, they run the tabloid mag Dirtbag, which exposes dark secrets of show biz celebrities.

The show's second season opens with Lucy making up to find her attorney, actress Julia Mallory (Laura Allen), dead and clubbed to death.

Do you feel like an expert in gossip now?

C: I do. I have a lot of stories to bring to the table [laughter].

Any of your own stories in there?

C: Well, it could be like, a story of a friend's friend. We don't copy anyone's life per se. We take a little bit of everyone's, add a twist and come up with something that you think you know has really close.

How do you juggle motherhood and work?

C: I'm an expert multi-tasker.

Who do you think is the easiest paparazzi target in show biz?

C: Easiest? I would say Paris Hilton or Britney Spears.

Someone that "Dirt" would love to get a scoop on?

C: Brad Pitt and that tall young girlfriend of his. What's her name? Angelina? [Laughter.]

What are Lucy's redeeming qualities?

C: Her relationship with Don, I think, is...

Eavesdropping?

C: Yeah, Brenan. I was all about painting the truth. She wasn't going to print something that was made up, like was like, 'Look! You abuse this business and that's the truth.' Her job is to put out a good magazine. This season, it's mostly about her relationship with Don.

Did you deliberately look for a role that is completely different from Monica of "Friends?"

C: Yeah, I absolutely did. I was on "Friends" for 10 years. That was a very high energy, obsessive-compulsive character. I like to play someone who is a lot more...let's say grounded. Lucy is just more solid and less emotional. That's fun and challenging to me. Now it's more challenging to find someone like her, you know, for person you love to hate.

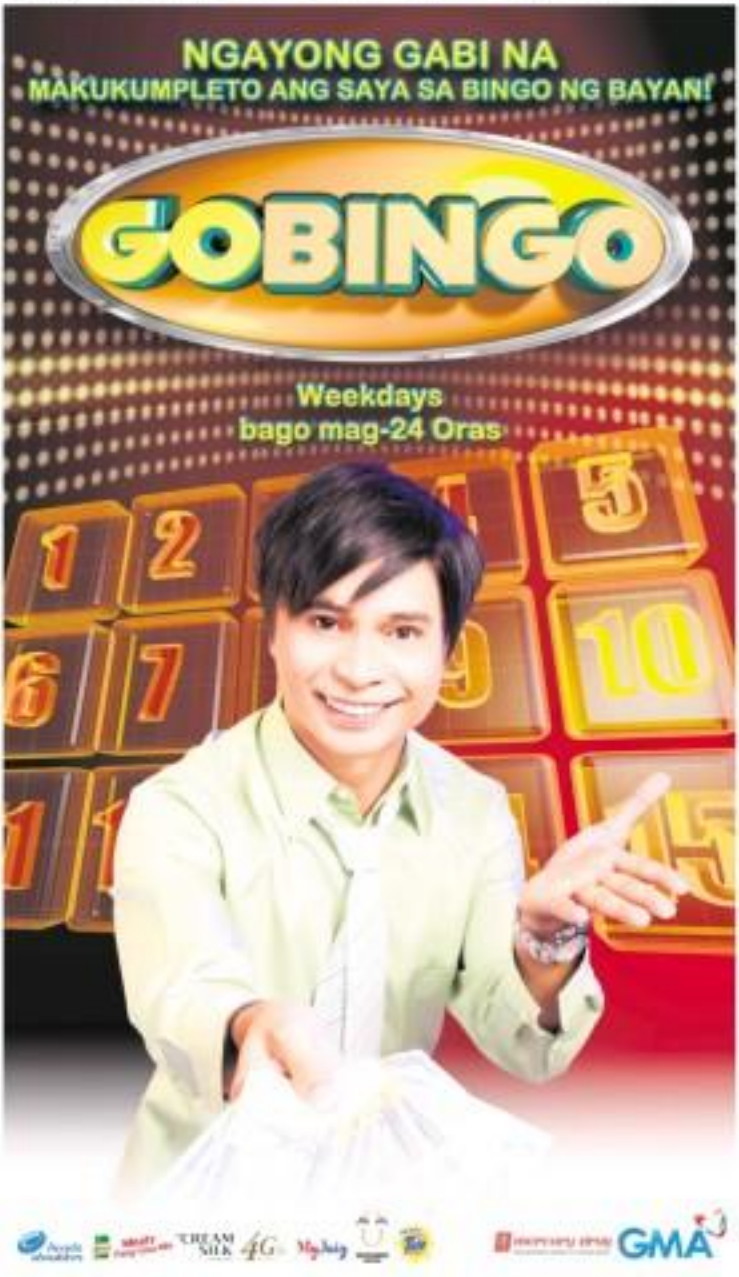
Do you see the paparazzi differently now?

C: Not really.

I: They're advantageous.

C: It's just getting accurate more than it ever was. Now with the cameras, you can never say the right thing. I mean, it doesn't matter what you say, it's going to be misconstrued or put in the wrong way and you're going to come off bad. The photographers are nice... love them. It's the videographers who are tougher.

CONTINUED ON



Candidly, Courteney

"IGNORANCE is bliss," says Courteney Cox character, who thinks going magazines, except during pre-production work for the show.

Turn to page 43

What's the weirdest place you've accosted to sign them? Do you find them in your garden?

C: At the funeral of a son of someone very close to me. It was just horrendous. They followed me there! It was so inappropriate. That would be me the weirdest, but [certainly] the worst.

How shy you handle them?

C: I just kind of get used to it. I was rather [recently] and my God, it's so brutal. It's amazing how many people are.

Do you think writers are in some way responsible for what comes out in this tabloids?

I: If you're a 20-year-old girl in Minnesota and you get drunk, it doesn't end up in the paper. It's a 20-year-old actor gets drunk and it lands in the paper. And that actor do something more obnoxious than the Minnesota girl? Hm mm. So I'm responsibility ultimately lies with the journalists.

Now that you mean a gentleman's bet, do you get a lot of pressure from the networks?

C: Not really. The network is definitely very involved. [The people behind the shows] are really smart and great to work with. We have a very tight budget, but they're pretty great about letting us come up with stuff.

What's gone through your head when you do love scenes?

C: It's not a very comfortable situation to be in. Luckily, I'm friends with the guy I'm doing most of the love scenes with. I mean, I've been on many, I know they're going to shoot each scene in a way that I feel comfortable. The other actors are always nice and respectful.

Why was it decided that Jen's character should be schizophrenic?

C: Matthew Carnahan, who wrote and created the show, was doing research for something else—about a schizophrenic guy. When we came to him about this idea... it just made for such an interesting, sympathetic character.

I: If you are schizophrenic, it all... it's not like you're actually going on from an audience perspective. It sort of comments on the mentality of the situation. If everybody else is involved in it, it's difficult for them to take a moral viewpoint. There are a lot of high functioning schizophrenics. The good thing about people with high functioning illness is that you don't know that they're mentally ill.

Do you think other celebrities provoke the paparazzi because they want to be in a magazine just for publicity?

C: That definitely happens.

Did you think you'd be in a TV show again after "Friends?"

C: I only wanted to be sure that this show is something I really cared about. If it didn't work out, at least I had a great time doing it.

What does this show mean to you?

C: From conception, it's something that I was a part of. The fact that we're picked up for a second season is a huge accomplishment. It's hard enough to make a pilot and get picked up.

Jennifer Aniston appeared in the show. What was it like working with her again?

C: We had a ball. It was really fun to come in the set and play completely different characters and just be together.

You had a kissing scene with her.

C: The kiss was not important, but did a lot of takes doing it but... I actually don't kiss her longer than that.

I: No could.

C: They just made such a big thing out of it because maybe the way they filmed it—they went to the kiss and then cuts from the kiss. That cuts second in there twisted...

Just like Britney and Madonna?

C: No. That was longer [laughter]. I: I had tongues in there, didn't it?

C: They did? [To Jen] no one to that.

Will the "Friends" reunion ever happen?

C: I have a feeling it's not going to. The longer we wait, the older we get.

"The Goldies/Friends"?

I: That's an idea.

How did you get to be powerful when others get driven crazy by the paparazzi?

C: What can you do? It's going to happen even if you get upset about it.

You're not upset at all?

C: As long as I look OK in the picture, I don't care [laughter].

"Dirt" airs Sundays, 10 p.m., on the Hero Channel.

Email lucas@inquirer.com.ph

Christian film fest opens today

THE METRO MANILA CHRISTIAN Film Festival (MMCF), which recognizes independent films that promote Christian values, runs today till April 19 at the Union Church of Manila, Radia cor. Legaspi St. Legaspi Village, Makati. Admission is free.

The organizers promise to showcase "relevant, inspirational and empowering" films.

Screening schedule

- TODAY: "Iris, Anak (Father Iris)," 9:30 p.m.; "Taglay Ko Dito (Ghost Killer)," 7:30 p.m.; "Ito Kim (Kungsu My Lungs) (Heaven's Gate)," 10:15 p.m.
- TOMORROW: "The Climb," 6 p.m.; "The Bridge," 7:45 p.m.; "Beyond (Orientasyong Isang Kristiyano ... sa Kapaligiran)," 9:30-10 p.m.
- APRIL 16: "Dilungan (Looking to Forgive), 6 p.m.; "I Vow to Christ," 7 p.m.
- APRIL 17: "Magkaibigan Be-kissed From Shame," 4 p.m.; "The Ride," 6 p.m.; "Mimong Asul, Oliry Lang Yen (Mimong Asul, It's Okay)," 7:45 p.m.; "All Things New," 8:30 p.m.
- APRIL 18: "Heroes & Friends (On The Aple Pie)," 4 p.m. (for kids); "You Are Special," 5:30 p.m. (for kids); "The Hope 7 p.m.; "Ang Lupa (The Town)," 9 p.m.
- April 19: "Heroes & Friends: Witches' The Jesuits Riddles," 8 a.m. (for kids); "Frankenkids and the Mini Monsters on OES," 10 a.m. (for kids); "Something to Sing About," 1 p.m.; "The Ride," 2:30 p.m.

Call 812-3699 or 812-8082, loc. 213.

Kristine, director...

...wrote no another soap to replace 'Rumayon.' That's how childish he is to give up the show. Sabi niya parang dance show. Je ete pasok magsweak na Kristine together bang sabi wearing ganya mlk. I don't know how they will tell Kristine tone changing last nonyo. Mahirap na yag attitude problem tuloy. Baka ma ay mahumpisa."

Kristine can deny this to high heavens, don't her perceptive as a one. But word gets around. No matter how we try to exude it, truth has an uncanny way of reaching up with a sooner or later.

Long-standing gap

Guess who the young actress is who broke down during an acting workshop. After some sobbing, she blurted out, "Why don't I have a mother like her?" The facilitator was stunned to find out that mother and daughter had a long-standing gap. It turns out that the mom is no longer on speaking terms. They live under one roof but compose silent rituals and most of the time, "Mother Dearest." Pinoy version!

Envious of co-stars

Guess who this other young actress is who's envious of two actresses. (Even the name and work) who are allowed to choose their projects and co-stars. The director she was referring to gave her a wake-up call: "Shhh! These two actresses have acting awards already. Mala-level ka!"

Gilbert and Gabriel YA, ought to know that she must collect accolades first before she can collect her projects.

New alternative series

Taiwanese heartthrob Ric Chou and Mexican bae Mario Casanova host up your weekday afternoons (after "Princess ng Buenavo") in 606-CBN's newest "Hispanitude" offering "Bona Kind" and "El Cuerpo Del Deseo." Get to know Ric Chou. Taiwan's hottest teen sensation and member of boy group Acoustic, who is to be bigger TV role. Casanova returns to another must-see performances. This is *Destiny of Malice*!

Art attack

Check out the new works by pride-winning artist Emmanuel Garibay in the exhibit, a "Peace's Habit" at Gallery Art Times (913.5992) at Serendra in The Fort until April 25. He works can be likened to the course and effect of certain elements. And there's not just for art's sake. It will shake you to the core!

Star complexion

A lot of local celebrities are going gaga over a miracle skin solution called Proactiv, just like their Hollywood counterparts such as Jennifer Love Hewitt, Vanessa Williams, Jessica Simpson, Alicia Keys. The Proactiv kit is available at Watsons so "show 'em like complexion" is sure within reach. You don't have to be a star to look like one.

E-mail: entertainment.inq@yahoo.com

CLASS PICTURE
SEATED (from L): Ronnie Henares, Sandy Hontiveros, Gina Martinez, Anna Garcia, Ida Henares, Raj Ad Fuentes. Standing (from L): Nini Flores Borja, Rocio Gan, Archie Lanuza, Marlyn Feliciano, Susan Paguiat and Pipo Libero.

ABBA. Marlyn and Sandy warm up before a rehearsal. Below left, kyoung Gina Martinez leans a hole on the dancefloor.

Put on those dancing...

From page G8

Merlyn, now mother of four and owner of a printing company.

Marlyn's credit is the late disco sweetie Chito Feliciano, who hosted "Dancetime with Chito," predecessor of "Penthouse."

"Dancetime" ran for a full decade, from 1982 to 1992, according to The Gavin, Anna's father and member of the show's Latin group.

Archie points out that Chito "discovered the dance group in local TV, upon the prodding of his cousin-to-be, Bob Stewart of Channel 7."

"Chito died in a plane crash in 1992," relates Archie who's retired from an executive post in Philippine Airlines.

Three years later, GMA 7 coach led by Chito Gualberto Duterte hit upon general manager Perla Bautista the thought up an episode for chaos for the network.

"We had just finished a game at the Valley Golf Club," Archie reminisces. "At the lounge, I suggested the title 'Penthouse 7,' because it sounded classy."

Two months later, in November 1993, the dance program debuted.

"My first co-host was [actress] Alma Alegre," Archie says. "Among the original dancers on the first telecast were Romano 'Billy' Castelo, Angie Ponda and Susan Papinski."

Archie was at first hesitant to host the show regularly but before he knew it, "I was booked. Rehearsals were twice a week, in my Bel-Air home."

"Plus, we sometimes had out-of-town shows," Dyo says.

"Penthouse dancers traveled as far north as Baguio and as far south as Zamboanga. "We were having such a great time, we didn't mind that we got paid [only] P70 a week," Isis exclaims.

"Later, it was increased to P80," Pipo says. "Money was not a big concern.

"Instead, we were all still getting allowances from our parents."

At the show's peak, we were earning at least P150 a show. That's P600 a month. The show was aired [between] week, on replays," says Gina, who managed the talent agency Orchestra.

Needless to say, the show's special-year run was studded with highlights.

Mike remembers sharing the stage with Michael Jackson sometime in 1995. "The Jacksons had entered in the Araneta Coliseum and Bob Arre 'Bounce Michael' actually sought me out and asked me to teach him a few steps. That was surreal!"

But Arr recalls learning the easy "Pop Jacking" from the Soul Train Gang, superstars of the US show "Soul Train."

OH THE era of "Dancetime with Chito" (L to R): Lanuza, Feliciano, Borja, Stewart and Libero. Photos

"Soul Train dancer Patricia Davis, niece of singer Sammy Davis Jr., was my girlfriend," they Arr explains. "She taught me some moves that I eventually used to top shows with Ben Tisoon and Gloria Diaz."

Archie, who is partial to Latin dances like Merengue and Bossa Nova, relates that the Swing was a Penthouse invention.

He recounts: "In 1977, I traveled to New York where I learned the Hustle. When we first featured it on the show, we renamed it Swing and used music from the line Gees' 'Saturday Night Fever' album."

Another memorable innovation was introduced by the much-mourned Hyperdisco National Folk Dance Company.

"Fresh from their world tour, the Hyperdisco dancers greeted on the show and demonstrated the Cumbia, which they had picked up in Colombia," Archie says.

The show's instructional segment was the most popular among viewers, says Sandy. "I met a young singer who told me that his parents allowed him to stay up late on Sunday nights, so he could learn the latest steps from us — and boast about it in school the next day."

Mighty challenge

The Gangis just trying to recall all the dance steps made popular on the show.

"We don't want to introduce new ones; we want to stick to the original," Pipo says.

And that's another mighty challenge, Ronnie admits. Memory gaps notwithstanding, they've managed to reconstruct old routines. It's like total recall.

For this show, Ida gets to hone her fashion skills. "I'm designing the costumes, which will be executed by Mimi Cimen and Paul Ramirez. Compared to our old costumes, the new designs are conservative."

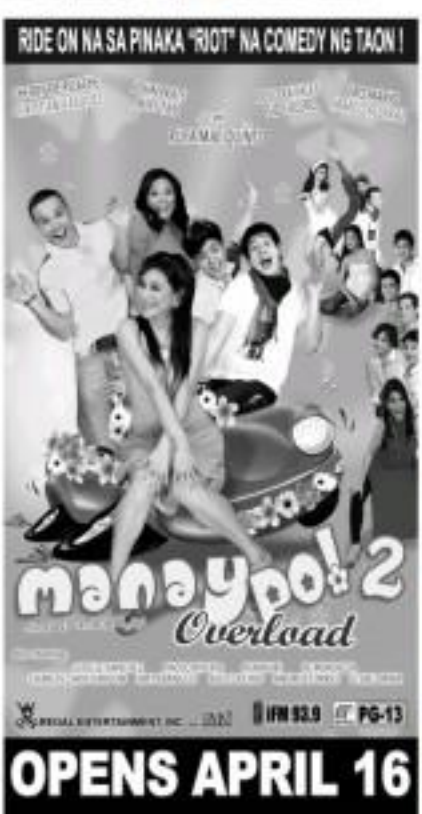
Sandy agrees that the project not only sharpens the mind; it also helps them stay in shape, considering that most of the women in the group have had two to four children. "Our persons jobs are sedentary," Sandy says. "Dancing is a great way to get off stress."

Pipo agrees: "My dancing weight is 150. When I got married, I ballooned to 170. Since starting rehearsals in October, I've maintained my weight."

But Marlyn, it's size an eye boost. "My kids didn't know I was a dancer. For them, I'm just mom. With this reunion show, they'll see a different side of me."

Email: bayanicandaga@hotmail.com

DIRK Ronnie Henares demonstrates a move.



Movies without 'bankable' stars

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FOUR MOVIES VIEW FIRST shot. Every now an then, only months apart, a team offers, lectures, encourages elected acting quartets about three unknown actors, as producers begin to showcase them as recognizable personalities.

As a result, the first film stars were born, and they quickly became major drawing factors that helped produce hits.

In time, stars became so popular that their talent fees skyrocketed to lovely heights. In the '50s, **Elizabeth Taylor** became the first star to be paid $1 million (for "Cleopatra").

Three days, a few superstars like **Tom Hanks** and **Tom Cruise** get paid a whopping $20 million-plus per picture, and talent agencies insist their fees in concerts that turn out to be blockbusters. They could end up making as much as $50 million per movie.

Blurred lines

This gave to show how important stars were here because producers' overseeing officer to guarantee huge profits. Such stars are called "bankable," because their mere presence to a production is almost always translates to being "money in the bank."

For the past two film seasons, however, Hollywood has been experiencing major upheavals related to the "bankability" of stars in the film production and distribution equation.

This is due to the fact that, in part a bluntly, many established stars have turned out to be much less bankable drawn than they used to be.

What happened? Stars' talent has been gotten so bloated that the films they appear in have such huge budgets, that it's become difficult for them to end up in the black.

As pricey films fail to recoup their hefty investment, let alone make big profits, disappointed financiers have started rethinking the entire moviem ventures.

Some of them have opted to bankroll smaller productions with much less expensive lead players—and a number of those have ended up making over $1.00 million each. Hollywood's founded by hit stars.

For instance, 2007 hits included "Transformers" and "Juno," which starred little-known young creators **Shia LaBeouf** and **Ellen Page**, respectively. Granted, quite a number of superstars' big-budget movies have bombed at the box office...one of them grossed only a dismal $9 million on its opening weekend.

So, the big $64,000 question has been raised in the "edge" of superstars finally seen in Hollywood and other filmmakers? Is the age of the star-cast finally upon us?

Richard Gere's career stars disagree. They would insist that established stars attract viewers not only with their proven charisma and talent, but also with their iconic appeal, which works psychologically on viewers' purely-filled celestial name.

Without stars, they claim, movies would be more experimental—breaking superstars' because viewers would feel less of an affinity with new lead players than they have with familiar and popular stars.

On the other hand, superstars do make too much money and their inflated salary fees make it difficult for many of their masters to turn a profit for their producers. So, something's got to give...and the first major adjustment would seem to be less unrealistic and unsympathetic stellar talent fees.

Feedback

From Paul R. Madrid of Madison City: "For a long time, I spoke up against excessive commercials on TV, but, nothing happened. I complained to government bodies, but all I got were endless refusals.

"It was dawned upon me that it would be better if Congress passed a law that shall grant a TV station to be on strong the right and responsible exercise of commercials per hour it wants. A TV station would then be penalized if and when it violated the law on commercials."

BIG LETDOWN IN BEIJING

Canadian singer Celine Dion performs at the Shanghai Stadium on Friday, April 11. The one-year-over's April 12 Beijing concert was cancelled because the organizers failed to obtain a permit despite selling thousands of tickets, local media reported. AFP/EPA

Special Cannes...

Bumper-to-bumper traffic

days's "Rotary Child," was screened last year. Mario O' Hara's "Babae ng Breakwater" was shown in 2006. Much earlier, in 1982, Mike de Leon's "Batch '81" and "Kisapmata" were screened. But the first Palme d'or to reach Cannes, in 1978, was "Tanging," by the late legendary filmmaker Lino Brocka. Brocka returned to the Fest-night in 1979 with "Bona."

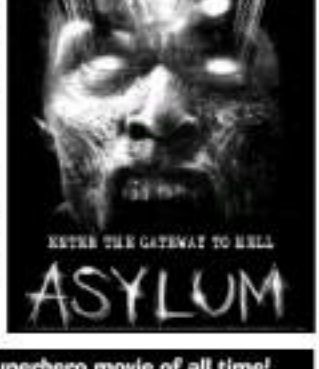
Also lined up during the weeklong Cinemanila fest in August is a series of workshops to promote art schools sponsored by the Department of Education, and Advance.

On to NY, Melbourne...

More selections of Pamalpin films will be screened at the New York Film Festival starting June 26 and at the Melbourne International Film Festival from July 25 to Aug. 10. The world tour continues in Beirut on Aug. 28, with Busan on record European films.

Screenings in Seoul, Rome, and Poitiers, France, are slated in September. The tour will reach further and Porto Alegre in France and Bucharest in Romania, in November.

(E-mail: nova@inquirer.com.ph)



Put on those dancing shoes one more time

PENTHOUSE GANG
(clockwise from left) Members of the Masters group (from L): Gino Marcelino, Renato and Mo Honarios, Tito Garcia, Marjet Feliciano, Anna Garcia, Pipo Libiran and Sandy Hontiveros

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rudy Espero

I DA HINARAS JOKES THAT there should be an oxygen tank waiting backstage where the Penthouse Gang recount a reunion show on April 20 at the NBC Tent.

In fact, Ma asserts, before the Gang members can even get to the first on the day, they are putting their bottle boxes at risk and sweating it out in punishing rehearsals after office hours.

Thrice a week, dancers from the 1970s primetime program, "Penthouse 7," premiere in a Makati studio, reviving steps they made popular almost three decades ago.

They've been at it since October last year, says Marlyn Feliciano, who also previously served on the gay disco "Salon." Director Ronnie Hontiveros points out, "The building's not yet perfect, but we're getting there."

Ma, a GMA 7 executive and married to Ronnie, recounts that they had to videotape some rehearsal sessions and e-mail them to the members currently based abroad, like Bay Area Forsters, Mike Mesarcurse, Nini Hontiveros and Ramon Pajarillo.

A day before his flight home, Mike, now a home care respiratory specialist in San Francisco, confesses in an e-mail to Ronnie that he has yet to download the rehearsal videos.

"I have two weeks to cram—a tall order. I hope we can pull it off without hurting ourselves," Mike says.

Quite fittingly, it all started in the bar. The idea for the reunion cropped up after Jackie Lamere, the show's host, sent all the Gang members a link to a YouTube video—the opening billboard of the old "Penthouse 7," posted online by a fan.

"We also posted one [the DSM 7 talk show] 'Mel & Joey' last year," recalls Sandy Hontiveros, now executive director of Ballet Philippines. "We realized that, after 27 years, things hadn't changed much. The boys are still the same jokesters... and the girls, we are still preoccupied with looking beautiful!"

YESTERDAY

Camaraderie

True enough, when Marlyn, Sandy, Gina Marcelino and Anne Garcia notice a roving cameraman on rehearsal night, they quickly huddle in a corner to remark their makeup.

"Camarachale," establishes Pipo Libiran-singles out the show's most enduring legacy. "I formed life long friendships on the program."

"We all clicked. We were one big happy family," agrees Anna, who sings for the group duet and a Catholic ministry. "The show ran from 1975 to 1982 because we had good dancers."

"More than anything else, it was so much fun, dancing with great dancers," notes